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THE

HISTORY

OF THE

DECLINE AND FALL

OF THE

ROMAN EMPIRE.

By EDWARD GIBBON, Esq.

IN TWELVE VOLUMES.

VOL. VI.

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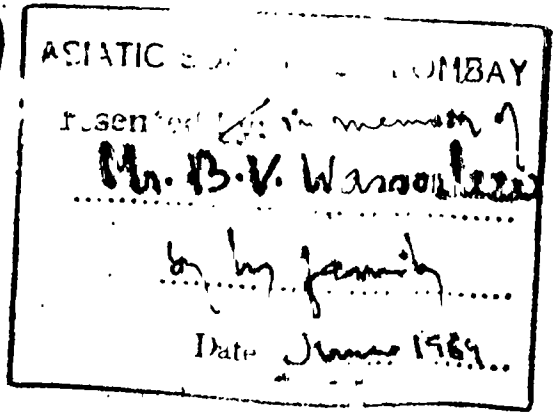

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THE

HISTORY

OF THE

DECLINE AND FALL

OF THE

ROMAN EMPIRE.

CHAP. XXXIII.

Death of Honorius—Valentinian III. emperor of the East—Administration of his mother Placidia—Ætius and Boniface—Conquest of Africa by the Vandals.

CHAP. XXXIII.

Last years and death of Honorius, A. D. 423, Aug. 27.

During a long and disgraceful reign of twenty-eight years, Honorius, emperor of the West, was separated from the friendship of his brother, and afterwards of his nephew, who reigned over the East, and Constantinople beheld, with apparent indifference and secret joy, the calamities of Rome. The strange adventures of Placidia[a] gradually renewed, and cemented, the alliance of the two empires. The daughter of the great Theo-

[a] See vol. v, p. 332-355.

WESTERN PART
OF THE
ROMAN EMPIRE.
ATLANTIC
OCEAN
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
SARMATIA
GERMANY
EUROPE
BRITAIN
IERNE or HIBERNIA or SCOTIA
LIBYA
AFRICA
Fortunate Islands
Nafamones

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dosius had been the captive, and the queen, of the Goths; she lost an affectionate husband; she was dragged in chains by his insulting assassin; she tasted the pleasure of revenge, and was exchanged, in the treaty of peace, for six hundred thousand measures of wheat. After her return from Spain to Italy, Placidia experienced a new persecution in the bosom of her family. She was averse to a marriage which had been stipulated without her consent; and the brave Constantius, as a noble reward for the tyrants whom he had vanquished, received from the hand of Honorius himself, the struggling and reluctant hand of the widow of Adolphus. But her resistance ended with the ceremony of the nuptials; nor did Placidia refuse to become the mother of Honoria and Valentinian III., or to assume and exercise an absolute dominion over the mind of her grateful husband. The generous soldier, whose time had hitherto been divided between social pleasure and military service, was taught new lessons of avarice and ambition: he extorted the title of Augustus; and the servant of Honorius was associated to the empire of the West. The death of Constantius, in the seventh month of his reign, instead of diminishing, seemed to increase, the power of Placidia; and the indecent familiarity[b] of her brother, which might

[b] Τα συνεχη κατα σωμα φιλημαται, is the expression of Olympiodorus (apud Photium, p. 197); who means, perhaps, to describe the same caresses which Mahomet bestowed on his *daughter* Phatemah. Quando (says the prophet himself), quando subit mihi desiderium Paradisi,

be no more than the symptoms of a childish affection, were universally attributed to incestuous love. On a sudden, by some base intrigues of a steward and a nurse, this excessive fondness was converted into an irreconcilable quarrel: the debates of the emperor and his sister were not long confined within the walls of the palace; and as the Gothic soldiers adhered to their queen, the city of Ravenna was agitated with bloody and dangerous tumults, which could only be appeased by the forced or voluntary retreat of Placidia and her children. The royal exiles landed at Constantinople, soon after the marriage of Theodosius, during the festival of the Persian victories. They were treated with kindness and magnificence; but as the statues of the emperor Constantius had been rejected by the eastern court, the title of Augusta could not decently be allowed to his widow. Within a few months after the arrival of Placidia, a swift messenger announced the death of Honorius, the consequence of a dropsy; but the important secret was not divulged, till the necessary orders had been dispatched for the march of a large body of troops to the sea-coast of Dalmatia. The shops and the gates of Constantinople remained shut during seven days; and the loss of a foreign prince, who could neither be esteemed nor re-

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osculor eam, et ingero linguam meam in os ejus. But this sensual indulgence was justified by miracle and mystery; and the anecdote has been communicated to the public by the Reverend Father Maracci, in his Version and Confutation of the Koran, tom. i, p. 32.

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gretted, was celebrated with loud and affected demonstrations of the public grief.

Elevation and fall of the usurper John, A. D. 423-425.

While the ministers of Constantinople deliberated, the vacant throne of Honorius was usurped by the ambition of a stranger. The name of the rebel was John: he filled the confidential office of *Primicerius*, or principal secretary; and history has attributed to his character more virtues than can easily be reconciled with the violation of the most sacred duty. Elated by the submission of Italy, and the hope of an alliance with the Huns, John presumed to insult, by an embassy, the majesty of the eastern emperor; but when he understood that his agents had been banished, imprisoned, and at length chased away with deserved ignominy, John prepared to assert, by arms, the injustice of his claims. In such a cause, the grandson of the great Theodosius should have marched in person: but the young emperor was easily diverted, by his physicians, from so rash and hazardous a design; and the conduct of the Italian expedition was prudently entrusted to Ardaburius, and his son Aspar, who had already signalized their valour against the Persians. It was resolved, that Ardaburius should embark with the infantry; whilst Aspar, at the head of the cavalry, conducted Placidia, and her son Valentinian, along the sea-coast of the Hadriatic. The march of the cavalry was performed with such active diligence, that they surprised, without resistance, the important city of Aquileia; when the hopes of Aspar were unexpectedly con-

founded by the intelligence, that a storm had dispersed the imperial fleet; and that his father, with only two galleys, was taken and carried a prisoner into the port of Ravenna. Yet this incident, unfortunate as it might seem, facilitated the conquest of Italy. Ardaburius employed, or abused, the courteous freedom which he was permitted to enjoy, to revive among the troops a sense of loyalty and gratitude; and, as soon as the conspiracy was ripe for execution, he invited, by private messages, and pressed the approach of, Aspar. A shepherd, whom the popular credulity transformed into an angel, guided the eastern cavalry, by a secret, and, it was thought, an impassable road, through the morasses of the Po; the gates of Ravenna, after a short struggle, were thrown open; and the defenceless tyrant was delivered to the mercy, or rather to the cruelty, of the conquerors. His right hand was first cut off; and, after he had been exposed, mounted on an ass, to the public derision, John was beheaded in the circus of Aquileia. The emperor Theodosius, when he received the news of the victory, interrupted the horse-races; and singing, as he marched through the streets, a suitable psalm, conducted his people from the Hippodrome to the church, where he spent the remainder of the day in grateful devotion.[c]

[c] For these revolutions of the western empire, consult Olympiodor. apud Phot. p. 192, 193, 196, 197, 200; Sozomen, l. ix, c. 16; Socrates, l. vii, 23, 24; Philostorgius, l. xii, c. 10, 11, and Godefroy, Dissertat. p, 486; Procopius, de Bell. Vandal. l. i, c. 3, p. 182, 183; Theophanes, in Chronograph. p. 72, 73, and the Chronicles.

CHAP. XXXIII.

Valentinian III, emperor of the West, A. D. 425-455.

In a monarchy, which, according to various precedents, might be considered as elective, or hereditary, or patrimonial, it was impossible that the intricate claims of female and collateral succession should be clearly defined;[d] and Theodosius, by the right of consanguinity or conquest, might have reigned the sole legitimate emperor of the Romans. For a moment, perhaps, his eyes were dazzled by the prospect of unbounded sway; but his indolent temper gradually acquiesced in the dictates of sound policy. He contented himself with the possession of the East; and wisely relinquished the laborious task of waging a distant and doubtful war against the barbarians beyond the Alps; or of securing the obedience of the Italians and Africans, whose minds were alienated by the irreconcilable difference of language and interest. Instead of listening to the voice of ambition, Theodosius resolved to imitate the moderation of his grandfather, and to seat his cousin Valentinian on the throne of the West. The royal infant was distinguished at Constantinople by the title of *Nobilissimus:* he was promoted, before his departure from Thessalonica, to the rank and dignity of *Cæsar;* and, after the conquest of Italy, the patrician Helion, by the authority of Theodosius, and in the presence of the senate, saluted Valen-

[d] See Grotius de Jure Belli et Pacis, l. ii, c. 7. He has laboriously, but vainly, attempted to form a reasonable system of jurisprudence, from the various and discordant modes of royal succession, which have been introduced by fraud or force, by time or accident.

tinian III. by the name of Augustus, and solemnly invested him with the diadem, and the imperial purple.[e] By the agreement of the three females who governed the Roman world, the son of Placidia was betrothed to Eudoxia, the daughter of Theodosius and Athenais; and, as soon as the lover and his bride had attained the age of puberty, this honourable alliance was faithfully accomplished. At the same time, as a compensation, perhaps, for the expences of the war, the Western Illyricum was detached from the Italian dominions, and yielded to the throne of Constantinople.[f] The emperor of the East acquired the useful dominion of the rich and maritime province of Dalmatia, and the dangerous sovereignty of Pannonia and Noricum, which had been filled and ravaged above twenty years, by a promiscuous crowd of Huns, Ostrogoths, Vandals, and *Bavarians*. Theodosius and Valentinian continued to respect the obligations of their public and domestic alliance; but the unity of the Roman government was finally dissolved. By a positive declaration, the validity of all future laws was limited to the dominions of their peculiar author; unless he should think proper to communicate them, subscribed with his own

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[e] The original writers are not agreed (see Muratori, Annali d'Italia, tom. iv, p. 139) whether Valentinian received the imperial diadem at Rome or Ravenna. In this uncertainty, I am willing to believe, that some respect was shewn to the senate.

[f] The Count de Buat (Hist. des Peuples de l'Europe, tom. vii, p. 292-300) has established the reality, explained the motives, and traced the consequences, of this remarkable cession.

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hand, for the approbation of his independent colleague.[g]

Administration of his mother Placidia, A. D. 425-450.

Valentinian, when he received the title of Augustus, was no more than six years of age: and his long minority was entrusted to the guardian care of a mother, who might assert a female claim to the succession of the western empire. Placidia envied, but she could not equal, the reputation and virtues of the wife and sister of Theodosius; the elegant genius of Eudocia, the wise and successful policy of Pulcheria. The mother of Valentinian was jealous of the power which she was incapable of exercising:[h] she reigned twenty-five years, in the name of her son; and the character of that unworthy emperor gradually countenanced the suspicion, that Placidia had enervated his youth by a dissolute education, and studiously diverted his attention from every manly and honourable pursuit. Amidst the decay of military spirit, her armies were commanded

Her two generals, Ætius and Boniface.

[g] See the first *Novel* of Theodosius, by which he ratifies and communicates (A. D. 438) the Theodosian Code. About forty years before that time, the unity of legislation had been proved by an exception. The Jews, who were numerous in the cities of Apulia and Calabria, produced a law of the East to justify their exemption from municipal offices (Cod. Theod. l. xvi, tit. viii, leg. 13); and the western emperor was obliged to invalidate, by a special edict, the law, quam constat meis partibus esse damnosam. Cod. Theod. l. xi, tit. i, leg. 158.

[h] Cassiodorius (Varior. l. xi, epist. i, p. 238) has compared the regencies of Placidia and Amalasuntha. He arraigns the weakness of the mother of Valentinian, and praises the virtues of his royal mistress. On this occasion, flattery seems to have spoken the language of truth.

by two generals, Ætius[i] and Boniface,[k] who may be deservedly named as the last of the Romans. Their union might have supported a sinking empire; their discord was the fatal and immediate cause of the loss of Africa. The invasion and defeat of Attila have immortalized the fame of Ætius; and though time has thrown a shade over the exploits of his rival, the defence of Marseilles, and the deliverance of Africa, attest the military talents of Count Boniface. In the field of battle, in partial encounters, in single combats, he was still the terror of the barbarians: the clergy, and particularly his friend Augustin, were edified by the christian piety, which had once tempted him to retire from the world; the people applauded his spotless integrity; the army dreaded his equal and inexorable justice, which may be displayed in a very singular example. A peasant, who complained of the criminal intimacy between his wife and a Gothic soldier, was directed to attend his tribunal the following day: in the evening the count, who

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[i] Philostorgius, l. xii, c. 12, and Godefroy's Dissertat. p. 493, &c.; and Renatus Frigeridus, apud Gregor. Turon. l. ii, c. 8, in tom. ii, p. 163. The father of Ætius was Gaudentius, an illustrious citizen of the province of Scythia, and master-general of the cavalry; his mother was a rich and noble Italian. From his earliest youth, Ætius, as a soldier and a hostage, had conversed with the barbarians.

[k] For the character of Boniface, see Olympiodorus, apud Phot. p. 196; and St Augustin. apud Tillemont, Memoires Eccles. tom. xiii, p. 712-715, 886. The bishop of Hippo at length deplored the fall of his friend, who, after a solemn vow of chastity, had married a second wife of the Arian sect, and who was suspected of keeping several concubines in his house.

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had diligently informed himself of the time and place of the assignation, mounted his horse, rode ten miles into the country, surprised the guilty couple, punished the soldier with instant death, and silenced the complaints of the husband, by presenting him the next morning, with the head of the adulterer. The abilities of Ætius and Boniface might have been usefully employed against the public enemies, in separate and important commands; but the experience of their past conduct should have decided the real favour and confidence of the empress Placidia. In the melancholy season of her exile and distress, Boniface alone had maintained her cause with unshaken fidelity; and the troops and treasures of Africa had essentially contributed to extinguish the rebellion. The same rebellion had been supported by the zeal and activity of Ætius, who brought an army of sixty thousand Huns from the Danube to the confines of Italy, for the service of the usurper. The untimely death of John compelled him to accept an advantageous treaty; but he still continued, the subject and the soldier of Valentinian, to entertain a secret, perhaps a treasonable, correspondence with his barbarian allies, whose retreat had been purchased by liberal gifts, and more liberal promises. But Ætius possessed an advantage of singular moment in a female reign: he was present: he besieged, with artful and assiduous flattery, the palace of Ravenna; disguised his dark designs with the mask of loyalty and friendship; and at length

deceived both his mistress and his absent rival, by a subtle conspiracy, which a weak woman, and a brave man, could not easily suspect. He secretly persuaded[1] Placidia to recal Boniface from the government of Africa; he secretly advised Boniface to disobey the imperial summons: to the one, he represented the order as a sentence of death; to the other, he stated the refusal as a signal of revolt; and when the credulous and unsuspecting count had armed the province in his defence, Ætius applauded his sagacity in foreseeing the rebellion, which his own perfidy had excited. A temperate enquiry into the real motives of Boniface, would have restored a faithful servant to his duty and to the republic; but the arts of Ætius still continued to betray and to inflame, and the count was urged, by persecution, to embrace the most desperate counsels. The success with which he eluded or repelled the first attacks, could not inspire a vain confidence, that, at the head of some loose, disorderly Africans, he should be able to withstand the regular forces of the West, commanded by a rival, whose military character it was impossible for him to despise. After some hesitation, the last struggles of prudence and loyalty, Boniface dispatched a trusty friend to the court, or rather to the camp, of Gonderic, king of the

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Error and revolt of Boniface in Africa, A. D. 427.

[1] Procopius (de Bell. Vandal. l. i, c. 3, 4, p. 182–186) relates the fraud of Ætius, the revolt of Boniface, and the loss of Africa. This anecdote, which is supported by some collateral testimony (see Ruinart, Hist. Persecut. Vandal. p. 420, 421), seems agreeable to the practice of ancient and modern courts, and would be naturally revealed by the repentance of Boniface.

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Vandals, with the proposal of a strict alliance, and the offer of an advantageous and perpetual settlement.

He invites the Vandals, A. D. 428.

After the retreat of the Goths, the authority of Honorius had obtained a precarious establishment in Spain; except only in the province of Gallicia, where the Suevi and the Vandals had fortified their camps, in mutual discord, and hostile independence. The Vandals prevailed; and their adversaries were besieged in the Nervasian hills, between Leon and Oviedo, till the approach of Count Asterius compelled, or rather provoked, the victorious barbarians to remove the scene of the war to the plains of Bœtica. The rapid progress of the Vandals soon required a more effectual opposition; and the master-general Castinus marched against them with a numerous army of Romans and Goths. Vanquished in battle by an inferior enemy, Castinus fled with dishonour to Tarragona; and this memorable defeat, which has been represented as the punishment, was most probably the effect, of his rash presumption.[m] Seville and Carthagena became the reward, or rather the prey, of the ferocious conquerors; and the vessels which they found in the harbour of Carthagena, might easily transport them to the isles of Majorca and Minorca, where the Spanish fugitives, as in a secure recess, had vainly concealed their families and their fortunes. The

[m] See the Chronicles of Prosper and Idatius. Salvian (de Gubernat. Dei, l. vii, p. 246, Paris, 1608) ascribes the victory of the Vandals to their superior piety. They fasted, they prayed, they carried a bible in the front of the host, with the design, perhaps, of reproaching the perfidy and sacrilege of their enemies.

experience of navigation, and perhaps the prospect of Africa, encouraged the Vandals to accept the invitation which they received from Count Boniface; and the death of Gonderic served only to forward and animate the bold enterprise. In the room of a prince, not conspicuous for any superior powers of the mind or body, they acquired his bastard brother, the terrible Genseric;[n] a name, which, in the destruction of the Roman empire, has deserved an equal rank with the names of Alaric and Attila. The king of the Vandals is described to have been of a middle stature, with a lameness in one leg, which he had contracted by an accidental fall from his horse. His slow and cautious speech seldom declared the deep purposes of his soul: he disdained to imitate the luxury of the vanquished; but he indulged the sterner passions of anger and revenge. The ambition of Genseric was without bounds, and without scruples; and the warrior could dexterously employ the dark engines of policy to solicit the allies who might be useful to his success, or to scatter among his enemies the seeds of hatred and contention. Almost in the moment of his departure he was informed, that Hermanric, king of the Suevi, had presumed to

Genseric, king of the Vandals.

[n] Gizericus (his name is variously expressed) staturâ mediocris et equi casû claudicans, animo profundus, sermone rarus, luxuriæ contemptor, irâ turbidus habendi, cupidus, ad solicitandas gentes providentissimus, semina contentionum jacere, odia miscere paratus. Jornandes, de Rebus Geticis, c. 33, p. 657. This portrait, which is drawn with some skill, and a strong likeness, must have been copied from the Gothic history of Cassiodorius.

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ravage the Spanish territories, which he was resolved to abandon. Impatient of the insult, Genseric pursued the hasty retreat of the Suevi as far as Merida; precipitated the king and his army into the river Anas, and calmly returned to the sea-shore, to embark his victorious troops. The vessels which transported the Vandals over the modern Straits of Gibraltar, a channel only twelve miles in breadth, were furnished by the Spaniards, who anxiously wished their departure; and by the African general, who had implored their formidable assistance.*

He lands in Africa, A. D. 429, May 6

Our fancy, so long accustomed to exaggerate and multiply the martial swarms of barbarians that seemed to issue from the north, will perhaps be surprised by the account of the army which Genseric mustered on the coast of Mauritania. The Vandals, who in twenty years had penetrated from the Elbe to Mount Atlas, were united under the command of their warlike king; and he reigned with equal authority over the Alani, who had passed, within the term of human life, from the cold of Scythia to the excessive heat of an African climate. The hopes of the bold enterprise had excited many brave adventurers of the Gothic nation; and many desperate provincials were tempted to repair their

and reviews his army, A. D. 429.

* See the Chronicle of Idatius. That bishop, a Spaniard and a contemporary, places the passage of the Vandals in the month of May, of the year of Abraham (which commences in October) 2444. This date, which coincides with A. D. 429, is confirmed by Isidore, another Spanish bishop, and is justly preferred to the opinion of those writers, who have marked for that event, one of the two preceding years. See Pagi Critica, tom. ii, p. 205, &c.

fortunes by the same means which had occasioned their ruin. Yet this various multitude amounted only to fifty thousand effective men; and though Genseric artfully magnified his apparent strength, by appointing eighty *chiliarchs*, or commanders of thousands, the fallacious increase of old men, of children, and of slaves, would scarcely have swelled his army to the number of fourscore thousand persons.[p] But his own dexterity, and the discontents of Africa, soon fortified the Vandal powers, by the accession of numerous and active allies. The parts of Mauritania, which border on the great desert, and the Atlantic ocean, were filled with a fierce and untractable race of men, whose savage temper had been exasperated, rather than reclaimed, by their dread of the Roman arms. The wandering Moors,[q] as they gradually ventured to approach the seashore, and the camp of the Vandals, must have viewed with terror and astonishment the dress, the armour, the martial pride and discipline of the unknown strangers, who had landed on their

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The Moors.

[p] Compare Procopius (de Bell. Vandal. l. i, c. 5, p. 190), and Victor Vetensis (de Persecutione Vandal. l. i, c. 1, p. 3, edit. Ruinart). We are assured by Idatius, that Genseric evacuated Spain, cum Vandalis *omnibus* eorumque familis; and Possidius (in Vit. Augustin, c. 28, apud Ruinart, p. 427) describes his army, as manus ingens immanium gentium Vandalorum et Alanorum, commixtam secum habens Gothorum gentem, aliarumque diversarum personas.

[q] For the manners of the Moors, see Procopius (de Bell. Vandal. l. ii, c. 6, p. 249); for their figure and complexion, M. de Buffon (Histoire Naturelle, tom. iii, p. 430). Procopius says in general, that the Moors had joined the Vandals before the death of Valentinian (de Bell. Vandal. l. i, c. 5, p. 190); and it is probable, that the independent tribes did not embrace any uniform system of policy.

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coast; and the fair complexions of the blue-eyed warriors of Germany, formed a very singular contrast with the swarthy or olive hue, which is derived from the neighbourhood of the torrid zone. After the first difficulties had in some measure been removed, which arose from the mutual ignorance of their respective language, the Moors, regardless of any future consequence, embraced the alliance of the enemies of Rome; and a crowd of naked savages rushed from the woods and valleys of Mount Atlas, to satiate their revenge on the polished tyrants, who had injuriously expelled them from their native sovereignty of the land.

The donatists.

The persecution of the donatists[r] was an event not less favourable to the designs of Genseric. Seventeen years before he landed in Africa, a public conference was held at Carthage, by the order of the magistrate. The catholics were satisfied, that, after the invincible reasons which they had alleged, the obstinacy of the schismatics must be inexcusable and voluntary; and the emperor Honorius was persuaded to inflict the most rigorous penalties on a faction, which had so long abused his patience and clemency. Three hundred bishops,[t] with many thousands of the inferior clergy, were torn from their churches,

[r] See Tillemont, Memoires Eccles. tom. xiii, p. 516-558; and the whole series of the persecution, in the original monuments, published by Dupin at the end of Optatus, p. 323-515.

[t] The donatist bishops, at the conference of Carthage, amounted to 279; and they asserted, that their whole number was not less than 400. The catholics had 286 present, 120 absent, besides sixty-four vacant bishoprics.

stripped of their ecclesiastical possessions, banished to the islands, and proscribed by the laws, if they presumed to conceal themselves in the provinces of Africa. Their numerous congregations, both in the cities and in the country, were deprived of the rights of citizens, and of the exercise of religious worship. A regular scale of fines, from ten to two hundred pounds of silver, was curiously ascertained, according to the distinctions of rank and fortune, to punish the crime of assisting at a schismatic conventicle; and if the fine had been levied five times, without subduing the obstinacy of the offender, his future punishment was referred to the discretion of the imperial court.[t] By these severities, which obtained the warmest approbation of St Augustin,[u] great numbers of donatists were reconciled to the catholic church; but the fanatics, who still persevered in their opposition, were provoked to madness and despair; the distracted country was filled with tumult and bloodshed; the armed troops of Circumcellions alternately pointed their rage against themselves, or against their adversaries; and the calendar of martyrs recei-

[t] The fifth title of the sixteenth book of the Theodosian Code, exhibits a series of the imperial laws against the donatists, from the year 400 to the year 428. Of these the 54th law, promulgated by Honorius, A. D. 414, is the most severe and effectual.

[u] St Augustin altered his opinion with regard to the proper treatment of heretics. His pathetic declaration of pity and indulgence for the manichæans, has been inserted by Mr Locke (vol. iii, p. 469), among the choice specimens of his common-place book. Another philosopher, the celebrated Bayle (tom. ii, p. 445–496), has refuted, with superfluous diligence and ingenuity, the arguments, by which the bishop of Hippo justified, in his old age, the persecution of the donatists.

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ved on both sides a considerable augmentation.[x] Under these circumstances, Genseric, a christian, but an enemy of the orthodox communion, shewed himself to the donatists as a powerful deliverer, from whom they might reasonably expect the repeal of the odious and oppressive edicts of the Roman emperors.[y] The conquest of Africa was facilitated by the active zeal, or the secret favour, of a domestic faction; the wanton outrages against the churches and the clergy, of which the Vandals are accused, may be fairly imputed to the fanaticism of their allies; and the intolerant spirit, which disgraced the triumph of Christianity, contributed to the loss of the most important province of the West.[z]

Tardy repentance of Boniface, A. D. 430.

The court and the people were astonished by the strange intelligence, that a virtuous hero, after so many favours, and so many services, had renounced his allegiance, and invited the barba-

[x] See Tillemont, Mem. Eccles. tom. xiii, p. 586-592, 806. The donatists boasted of *thousands* of these voluntary martyrs. Augustin asserts, and probably with truth, that these numbers were much exaggerated; but he sternly maintains, that it was better that *some* should burn themselves in this world, than that *all* should burn in hell flames.

[y] According to St Augustin and Theodoret, the donatists were inclined to the principles, or at least to the party, of the Arians, which Genseric supported. Tillemont, Mem. Eccles. tom. vi, p. 68.

[z] See Baronius, Annal. Eccles. A. D. 428, No. 7; A. D. 439, No. 35. The cardinal, though more inclined to seek the cause of great events in heaven than on the earth, has observed the apparent connection of the Vandals and the donatists. Under the reign of the barbarians, the schismatics of Africa enjoyed an obscure peace of one hundred years; at the end of which, we may again trace them by the light of the imperial persecutions. See Tillemont, Mem. Eccles. tom. vi, p. 192, &c.

rians to destroy the province entrusted to his command. The friends of Boniface, who still believed that his criminal behaviour might be excused by some honourable motive, solicited, during the absence of Ætius, a free conference with the count of Africa; and Darius, an officer of high distinction, was named for the important embassy.* In their first interview at Carthage, the imaginary provocations were mutually explained; the opposite letters of Ætius were produced and compared; and the fraud was easily detected. Placidia and Boniface lamented their fatal error; and the count had sufficient magnanimity to confide in the forgiveness of his sovereign, or to expose his head to her future resentment. His repentance was fervent and sincere: but he soon discovered, that it was no longer in his power to restore the edifice which he had shaken to its foundations. Carthage, and the Roman garrisons, returned with their general to the allegiance of Valentinian; but the rest of Africa was still distracted with war and faction; and the inexorable king of the Vandals, disdaining all terms of accommodation, sternly refused to relinquish the possession of his prey. The band of veterans, who marched

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* In a confidential letter to Count Boniface, St Augustin, without examining the grounds of the quarrel, piously exhorts him to discharge the duties of a christian and a subject; to extricate himself without delay from his dangerous and guilty situation; and even, if he could obtain the consent of his wife, to embrace a life of celibacy and penance (Tillemont, Mem. Eccles. tom. xiii, p. 890). The bishop was intimately connected with Darius, the minister of peace (Id. tom. xiii, p. 928).

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under the standard of Boniface, and his hasty levies of provincial troops, were defeated with considerable loss: the victorious barbarians insulted the open country; and Carthage, Cirta, and Hippo Regius, were the only cities that appeared to rise above the general inundation.

Desolation of Africa.

The long and narrow tract of the African coast was filled with frequent monuments of Roman art and magnificence; and the respective degrees of improvement might be accurately measured by the distance from Carthage and the Mediterranean. A simple reflection will impress every thinking mind with the clearest idea of fertility and cultivation: the country was extremely populous; the inhabitants reserved a liberal subsistence for their own use; and the annual exportation, particularly of wheat, was so regular and plentiful, that Africa deserved the name of the common granary of Rome and of mankind. On a sudden the seven fruitful provinces, from Tangier to Tripoli, were overwhelmed by the invasion of the Vandals; whose destructive rage has perhaps been exaggerated by popular animosity, religious zeal, and extravagant declamation. War, in its fairest form, implies a perpetual violation of humanity and justice; and the hostilities of barbarians are inflamed by the fierce and lawless spirit which incessantly disturbs their peaceful and domestic society. The Vandals, where they found resistance, seldom gave quarter; and the deaths of their valiant countrymen were expiated by the ruin of the cities under whose walls they had fallen. Careless of the distinctions

of age, or sex, or rank, they employed every species of indignity and torture, to force from the captives a discovery of their hidden wealth. The stern policy of Genseric justified his frequent examples of military execution: he was not always the master of his own passions, or of those of his followers; and the calamities of war were aggravated by the licentiousness of the Moors, and the fanaticism of the donatists. Yet I shall not easily be persuaded, that it was the common practice of the Vandals to extirpate the olives, and other fruit-trees, of a country, where they intended to settle; nor can I believe that it was a usual stratagem to slaughter great numbers of their prisoners before the walls of a besieged city, for the sole purpose of infecting the air, and producing a pestilence, of which they themselves must have been the first victims.[b]

Siege of Hippo, A. D. 430, May.

The generous mind of Count Boniface was tortured by the exquisite distress of beholding the ruin which he had occasioned, and whose rapid progress he was unable to check. After the loss of a battle, he retired into Hippo Regius; where he was immediately besieged by an enemy, who considered him as the real bulwark

[b] The original complaints of the desolation of Africa are contained—1. In a letter from Capreolus, bishop of Carthage, to excuse his absence from the council of Ephesus (ap. Ruinart, p. 429). 2. In the life of St Augustin, by his friend and colleague Possidius (ap. Ruinart, p. 427). 3. In the History of the Vandalic Persecution, by Victor Vitensis (l. i, c. 1, 2, 3, edit. Ruinart). The last picture, which was drawn sixty years after the event, is more expressive of the author's passions than of the truth of facts.

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of Africa. The maritime colony of *Hippo*,[c] about two hundred miles westward of Carthage, had formerly acquired the distinguishing epithet of *Regius*, from the residence of Numidian kings; and some remains of trade and populousness still adhere to the modern city, which is known in Europe by the corrupted name of Bona. The military labours, and anxious reflections, of Count Boniface, were alleviated by the edifying conversation of his friend St Augustin;[d] till that bishop, the light and pillar of the catholic church, was gently released, in the third month of the siege, and in the seventy-sixth year of his age, from the actual and the impending calamities of his country. The youth of Augustin had been stained by the vices and errors which he so ingenuously confesses; but from the moment of his conversion to that of his death, the manners of the bishop of Hippo were pure and austere: and the most conspicuous of his virtues was an ardent zeal against heretics of every denomination; the Manichæans, the Donatists, and the Pelagians, against whom he waged a perpetual

Death of St Augustin, A. D. 430, Aug. 28.

[c] See Cellarius, Geograph. Antiq. tom. ii, part ii, p. 112. Leo African. in Ramusio, tom. i, fol. 70. L'Afrique de Marmol. tom. ii, p. 434, 437. Shaw's Travels, p. 46, 47. The old Hippo Regius was finally destroyed by the Arabs in the seventh century; but a new town, at the distance of two miles, was built with the materials; and it contained, in the sixteenth century, about three hundred families of industrious, but turbulent, manufacturers. The adjacent territory is renowned for a pure air, a fertile soil, and plenty of exquisite fruits.

[d] The life of St Augustin, by Tillemont, fills a quarto volume (Mem. Eccles. tom. xiii) of more than one thousand pages; and the diligence of that learned Jansenist was excited, on this occasion, by factious and devout zeal for the founder of his sect.

controversy. When the city, some months after his death, was burnt by the Vandals, the library was fortunately saved, which contained his voluminous writings; two hundred and thirty-two separate books or treatises on theological subjects, besides a complete exposition of the psalter and the gospel, and a copious magazine of epistles and homilies.[e] According to the judgment of the most impartial critics, the superficial learning of Augustin was confined to the Latin language;[f] and his style, though sometimes animated by the eloquence of passion, is usually clouded by false and affected rhetoric. But he possessed a strong, capacious, argumentative mind; he boldly sounded the dark abyss of grace, predestination, free-will, and original sin; and the rigid system of Christianity, which he framed, or restored,[g] has been entertained with

[e] Such at least is the account of Victor Vitensis (de Persecut. Vandal. l. i, c. 3); though Gennadius seems to doubt whether any person had read, or even collected, *all* the works of St Augustin (see Hieronym. Opera, tom. i, p. 319, in Catalog. Scriptor. Eccles.). They have been repeatedly printed; and Dupin (Bibliotheque Eccles. tom. iii, p. 158-257) has given a large and satisfactory abstract of them, as they stand in the last edition of the Benedictines. My personal acquaintance with the bishop of Hippo does not extend beyond the *Confessions*, and the *City of God*.

[f] In his early youth (Confess. i, 14) St Augustin disliked and neglected the study of Greek; and he frankly owns that he read the Platonists in a Latin version (Confes. vii, 9). Some modern critics have thought, that his ignorance of Greek disqualified him from expounding the Scripture; and Cicero or Quintilian would have required the knowledge of that language in a professor of rhetoric.

[g] These questions were seldom agitated, from the time of St Paul to that of St Augustin. I am informed that the Greek fathers maintain the natural sentiments of the semi-pelagians; and that the orthodoxy of St Augustin was derived from the manichæan school.

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public applause, and secret reluctance, by the Latin church.[h]

Defeat and retreat of Boniface, A. D. 431.

By the skill of Boniface, and perhaps by the ignorance of the Vandals, the siege of Hippo was protracted above fourteen months: the sea was continually open; and when the adjacent country had been exhausted by irregular rapine, the besiegers themselves were compelled by famine to relinquish their enterprise. The importance and danger of Africa were deeply felt by the regent of the West. Placidia implored the assistance of her eastern ally; and the Italian fleet and army were reinforced by Aspar, who sailed from Constantinople with a powerful armament. As soon as the force of the two empires was united under the command of Boniface, he boldly marched against the Vandals; and the loss of a second battle irretrievably decided the fate of Africa. He embarked with the precipitation of despair; and the people of Hippo were permitted, with their families and effects, to occupy the vacant place of the soldiers, the greatest part of whom were either slain or made prisoners by the Vandals. The Count, whose fatal

[h] The church of Rome has canonized Augustin, and reprobated Calvin. Yet as the *real* difference between them is invisible even to a theological microscope, the Molinists are oppressed by the authority of the saint, and the Jansenists are disgraced by their resemblance to the heretic. In the meanwhile, the protestant Arminians stand aloof, and deride the mutual perplexity of the disputants (see a curious Review of the Controversy, by Le Clerc, Bibliotheque Universelle, tom. xiv, p. 144-398). Perhaps a reasoner still more independent, may smile in his turn, when he peruses an Arminian Commentary on the epistle to the Romans.

credulity had wounded the vitals of the republic, might enter the palace of Ravenna with some anxiety, which was soon removed by the smiles of Placidia. Boniface accepted with gratitude the rank of patrician, and the dignity of master-general of the Roman armies; but he must have blushed at the sight of those medals, in which he was represented with the name and attributes of victory.[1] The discovery of his fraud, the displeasure of the empress, and the distinguished favour of his rival, exasperated the haughty and perfidious soul of Ætius. He hastily returned from Gaul to Italy, with a retinue, or rather with an army, of barbarian followers; and such was the weakness of the government, that the two generals decided their private quarrel in a bloody battle. Boniface was successful; but he received in the conflict a mortal wound from the spear of his adversary, of which he expired within a few days, in such christian and charitable sentiments, that he exhorted his wife, a rich heiress of Spain, to accept Ætius for her second husband. But Ætius could not derive any immediate advantage from the generosity of his dying enemy; he was proclaimed a rebel by the justice of Placidia; and though he attempted to

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His death, A. D. 432.

[1] Ducange, Fam. Byzant. p. 67. On one side, the head of Valentinian; on the reverse, Boniface, with a scourge in one hand, and a palm in the other, standing in a triumphal car, which is drawn by four horses, or, in another medal, by four stags; an unlucky emblem! I should doubt whether another example can be found of the head of a subject on the reverse of an imperial medal. See Science des Medailles, by the Pere Jobert, tom. i, p. 132–150, edit. of 1739, by the Baron de la Bastie.

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defend some strong fortresses erected on his patrimonial estate, the imperial power soon compelled him to retire into Pannonia, to the tents of his faithful Huns. The republic was deprived, by their mutual discord, of the service of her two most illustrious champions.[k]

Progress of the Vandals in Africa, A. D. 431-439.

It might naturally be expected, after the retreat of Boniface, that the Vandals would achieve, without resistance or delay, the conquest of Africa. Eight years, however, elapsed, from the evacuation of Hippo to the reduction of Carthage. In the midst of that interval, the ambitious Genseric, in the full tide of apparent prosperity, negotiated a treaty of peace, by which he gave his son Hunneric for an hostage; and consented to leave the western emperor in the undisturbed possession of the three Mauritanias.[l] This moderation, which cannot be imputed to the justice, must be ascribed to the policy, of the conqueror. His throne was encompassed with domestic enemies; who accused the baseness of his birth, and asserted the legitimate claims of his nephews, the sons of Gonderic. Those nephews, indeed, he sacrificed to his safe-

[k] Procopius (de Bell. Vandal. l. i, c. 3, p. 185) continues the history of Boniface no farther than his return to Italy. His death is mentioned by Prosper and Marcellinus; the expression of the latter, that Ætius, the day before, had provided himself with a *longer* spear, implies something like a regular duel.

[l] See Procopius, de Bell. Vandal. l. i, c. 4, p. 186. Valentinian published several humane laws, to relieve the distress of his Numidian and Mauritanian subjects: he discharged them, in a great measure, from the payment of their debts, reduced their tribute to one-eighth, and gave them a right of appeal from the provincial magistrates to the prefect of Rome. Cod. Theod. tom. vi, Novell. p. 11, 12.

ty; and their mother, the widow of the deceased king, was precipitated, by his order, into the river Ampsaga. But the public discontent burst forth in dangerous and frequent conspiracies; and the warlike tyrant is supposed to have shed more Vandal blood by the hand of the executioner, than in the field of battle.[m] The convulsions of Africa, which had favoured his attack, opposed the firm establishment of his power; and the various seditions of the Moors and Germans, the donatists and catholics, continually disturbed, or threatened, the unsettled reign of the conqueror. As he advanced towards Carthage, he was forced to withdraw his troops from the western provinces; the sea-coast was exposed to the naval enterprises of the Romans of Spain and Italy; and in the heart of Numidia, the strong inland city of Corta still persisted in obstinate independence.[n] These difficulties were gradually subdued by the spirit, the perseverance, and the cruelty of Genseric; who alternately applied the arts of peace and war to the establishment of his African kingdom. He subscribed a solemn treaty, with the hope of deriving some advantage from the term of its continuance, and the moment of its violation. The vigilance of his enemies was relaxed by the protestations of friendship, which concealed his hostile approach; and Carthage was at length sur-

[m] Victor Vitensis, de Persecut. Vandal. l. ii, c. 5, p. 26. The cruelties of Genseric towards his subjects, are strongly expressed in Prosper's Chronicle, A. D. 442.

[n] Possidius, in Vit. Augustin. c. 28, apud Ruinart, p. 429.

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prised by the Vandals, five hundred and eighty-five years after the destruction of the city and republic by the younger Scipio.[o]

They surprise Carthage, A. D. 439, October 9.

A new city had arisen from its ruins, with the title of a colony; and though Carthage might yield to the royal prerogatives of Constantinople, and perhaps to the trade of Alexandria, or the splendour of Antioch, she still maintained the second rank in the West; as the *Rome* (if we may use the style of contemporaries) of the African world. That wealthy and opulent metropolis[p] displayed, in a dependent condition, the image of a flourishing republic. Carthage contained the manufactures, the arms, and the treasures of the six provinces. A regular subordination of civil honours, gradually ascended from the procurators of the streets and quarters of the city, to the tribunal of the supreme magistrate, who, with the title of proconsul, represented the state and dignity of a consul of ancient Rome. Schools and *gymnasia* were instituted for the education of the African youth; and the liberal arts and manners, grammar, rhetoric, and philosophy, were publicly taught in the Greek and Latin languages.

[o] See the Chronicles of Idatius, Isidore, Prosper, and Marcellinus. They mark the same year, but different days, for the surprisal of Carthage.

[p] The picture of Carthage, as it flourished in the fourth and fifth centuries, is taken from the Expositio totius Mundi, p. 17, 18, in the third volume of Hudson's Minor Geographers; from Ausonius de Claris Urbibus, p. 228, 229; and principally from Salvian, de Gubernatione Dei, l. vii, p. 257, 258. I am surprised that the *Notitia* should not place either a mint, or an arsenal, at Carthage: but only a gynecæum, or female manufacture.

The buildings of Carthage were uniform and magnificent: a shady grove was planted in the midst of the capital; the *new* port, a secure and capacious harbour, was subservient to the commercial industry of citizens and strangers; and the splendid games of the circus and theatre were exhibited almost in the presence of the barbarians. The reputation of the Carthagenians was not equal to that of their country, and the reproach of Punic faith still adhered to their subtle and faithless character.[q] The habits of trade, and the abuse of luxury, had corrupted their manners; but their impious contempt of monks, and the shameless practice of unnatural lusts, are the two abominations which excite the pious vehemence of Salvian, the preacher of the age.[r] The king of the Vandals severely reformed the vices of a voluptuous people; and the ancient, noble, ingenuous freedom of Carthage (these expressions of Victor are not without energy), was reduced by Genseric into a state of ignomi-

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[q] The anonymous author of the Expositio totius Mundi, compares, in his barbarous Latin, the country and the inhabitants; and, after stigmatizing their want of faith, he coolly concludes, Difficile autem inter eos invenitur bonus, tamen in multis pauci boni esse possunt. P. 18.

[r] He declares, that the peculiar vices of each country were collected in the sink of Carthage (l. vii, p. 257). In the indulgence of vice, the Africans applauded their manly virtue. Et illi se magis virilis fortitudinis esse crederent, qui maxime viros fœminei usûs probrositate fregissent (p. 268). The streets of Carthage were polluted by effeminate wretches, who publicly assumed the countenance, the dress, and the character of women (p. 264). If a monk appeared in the city, the holy man was pursued with impious scorn and ridicule; detestantibus ridentium cachinnis (p. 289).

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nious servitude. After he had permitted his licentious troops to satiate their rage and avarice, he instituted a more regular system of rapine and oppression. An edict was promulgated, which enjoined all persons, without fraud or delay, to deliver their gold, silver, jewels, and valuable furniture or apparel, to the royal officers; and the attempt to secrete any part of their patrimony, was inexorably punished with death and torture, as an act of treason against the state. The lands of the proconsular province, which formed the immediate district of Carthage, were accurately measured, and divided among the barbarians: and the conqueror reserved for his peculiar domain, the fertile territory of Byzacium, and the adjacent parts of Numidia and Getulia.[1]

African exiles and captives.

It was natural enough that Genseric should hate those whom he had injured: the nobility and senators of Carthage were exposed to his jealousy and resentment; and all those who refused the ignominious terms, which their honour and religion forbade them to accept, were compelled by the Arian tyrant to embrace the condition of perpetual banishment. Rome, Italy, and the provinces of the East, were filled with a crowd of exiles, of fugitives, and of ingenuous captives, who solicited the public compassion: and the benevolent epistles of Theodoret still preserve the names and misfortunes of Cælestian and

[1] Compare Procopius de Bell. Vandal. l. i, c. 5, p. 189, 190; and Victor Vitensis, de Persecut. Vandal. l. i, c. 4.

Maria.[t] The Syrian bishop deplores the misfortunes of Cælestian, who, from the state of a noble and opulent senator of Carthage, was reduced, with his wife and family, and servants, to beg his bread in a foreign country; but he applauds the resignation of the christian exile, and the philosophic temper, which, under the pressure of such calamities, could enjoy more real happiness, than was the ordinary lot of wealth and prosperity. The story of Maria, the daughter of the magnificent Eudæmon, is singular and interesting. In the sack of Carthage, she was purchased from the Vandals by some merchants of Syria, who afterwards sold her as a slave in their native country. A female attendant, transported in the same ship, and sold in the same family, still continued to respect a mistress whom fortune had reduced to the common level of servitude; and the daughter of Eudæmon received from her grateful affection the domestic services, which she had once required from her obedience. This remarkable behaviour divulged the real condition of Maria, who, in the absence of the bishop of Cyrrhus, was redeemed from slavery by the generosity of some soldiers of the garrison. The liberality of Theodoret provided for her decent maintenance; and she passed ten months among the deaconesses of the church; till she was unexpectedly informed, that her father, who had escaped from the ruin of Car-

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[t] Ruinart (p. 444-457) has collected from Theodoret, and other authors, the misfortunes, real and fabulous, of the inhabitants of Carthage.

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thage, exercised an honourable office in one of the western provinces. Her filial impatience was seconded by the pious bishop: Theodoret, in a letter still extant, recommends Maria to the bishop of Ægæ, a maritime city of Cilicia, which was frequented, during the annual fair, by the vessels of the West; most earnestly requesting, that his colleague would use the maiden with a tenderness suitable to her birth; and that he would entrust her to the care of such faithful merchants, as would esteem it a sufficient gain, if they restored a daughter, lost beyond all human hope, to the arms of her afflicted parent.

Fable of the seven sleepers.

Among the insipid legends of ecclesiastical history, I am tempted to distinguish the memorable fable of the SEVEN SLEEPERS;[a] whose imaginary date corresponds with the reign of the younger Theodosius, and the conquest of Africa by the Vandals.[x] When the emperor Decius persecuted the Christians, seven noble youths of

[a] The choice of fabulous circumstances is of small importance; yet I have confined myself to the narrative which was translated from the Syriac by the care of Gregory of Tours (de Gloriâ Martyrûm, l. i, c. 95, in Max. Bibliothecâ Patrum, tom. xi, p. 856), to the Greek acts of their martyrdom (apud Photium, p. 1400, 1401); and to the Annals of the Patriarch Eutychius (tom. i, p. 391, 531, 532, 535, Vers. Pocock).

[x] Two Syriac writers, as they are quoted by Assemanni (Bibliot. Oriental. tom. i, p. 336, 338), place the resurrection of the Seven Sleepers in the years 736 (A. D. 425), or 748 (A. D. 437), of the æra of the Seleucides. Their Greek acts, which Photius had read, assign the date of the thirty-eighth year of the reign of Theodosius, which may coincide either with A. D. 439, or 446. The period which had elapsed since the persecution of Decius is easily ascertained; and nothing less than the ignorance of Mahomet, or the legendaries, could suppose an interval of three or four hundred years.

Ephesus concealed themselves in a spacious cavern in the side of an adjacent mountain; where they were doomed to perish by the tyrant, who gave orders that the entrance should be firmly secured with a pile of huge stones. They immediately fell into a deep slumber, which was miraculously prolonged, without injuring the powers of life, during a period of one hundred and eighty-seven years. At the end of that time, the slaves of Adolius, to whom the inheritance of the mountain had descended, removed the stones, to supply materials for some rustic edifice: the light of the sun darted into the cavern, and the Seven Sleepers were permitted to awake. After a slumber, as they thought, of a few hours, they were pressed by the calls of hunger; and resolved that Jamblichus, one of their number, should secretly return to the city, to purchase bread for the use of his companions. The youth (if we may still employ that appellation) could no longer recognise the once familiar aspect of his native country; and his surprise was increased by the appearance of a large cross, triumphantly erected over the principal gate of Ephesus. His singular dress, and obsolete language, confounded the baker, to whom he offered an ancient medal of Decius as the current coin of the empire; and Jamblichus, on the suspicion of a secret treasure, was dragged before the judge. Their mutual enquiries produced the amazing discovery, that two centuries were almost elapsed since Jamblichus and his friends had escaped from the rage of a pagan tyrant. The bishop of Ephesus

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the clergy, the magistrates, the people, and, as it is said, the emperor Theodosius himself, hastened to visit the cavern of the Seven Sleepers; who bestowed their benediction, related their story, and at the same instant peaceably expired. The origin of this marvellous fable cannot be ascribed to the pious fraud and credulity of the *modern* Greeks, since the authentic tradition may be traced within half a century of the supposed miracle. James of Sarug, a Syrian bishop, who was born only two years after the death of the younger Theodosius, has devoted one of his two hundred and thirty homilies to the praise of the young men of Ephesus.[y] Their legend, before the end of the sixth century, was translated from the Syriac into the Latin language, by the care of Gregory of Tours. The hostile communions of the East preserve their memory with equal reverence; and their names are honourably inscribed in the Roman, the Habyssinian, and the Russian calendar.[z] Nor has their reputation been confined to the christian world. This po-

[y] James, one of the orthodox fathers of the Syrian church, was born A. D. 452: he began to compose his sermons, A. D. 474: he was made bishop of Batnæ, in the district of Sarug, and province of Mesopotamia, A. D. 519, and died A. D. 521. (Assemanni, tom. i. p. 288, 289). For the homily *de Pueris Ephesinis*, see p. 335-339: though I could wish that Assemanni had translated the text of James of Sarug, instead of answering the objections of Baronius.

[z] See the *Acta Sanctorum* of the Bollandists (Mensis Julii, tom. vi, p. 375-397). This immense calendar of saints, in one hundred and twenty-six years (1644-1770), and in fifty volumes in folio, has advanced no farther than the 7th day of October. The suppression of the jesuits has most probably checked an undertaking, which, through the medium of fable and superstition, communicates much historical and philosophical instruction.

pular tale, which Mahomet might learn when he drove his camels to the fairs of Syria, is introduced, as a divine revelation, into the Koran.[a] The story of the Seven Sleepers has been adopted, and adorned, by the nations, from Bengal to Africa, who profess the Mahometan religion;[b] and some vestiges of a similar tradition have been discovered in the remote extremities of Scandinavia.[c] This easy and universal belief, so expressive of the sense of mankind, may be ascribed to the genuine merit of the fable itself. We imperceptibly advance from youth to age, without observing the gradual, but incessant, change of human affairs; and even in our larger experience of history, the imagination is accustomed, by a perpetual series of causes and effects, to unite the most distant revolutions. But if the interval between two memorable æras could be instantly annihilated; if it were possible, after a momentary slumber of two hundred years, to

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[a] See Maracci Alcoran. Sura xviii, tom. ii, p. 420-427, and tom. i, part iv, p. 103. With such an ample privilege, Mahomet has not shewn much taste or ingenuity. He has invented the dog (Al Rakim) of the Seven Sleepers; the respect of the sun, who altered his course twice a day, that he might shine into the cavern; and the care of God himself, who preserved their bodies from putrefaction, by turning them to the right and left.

[b] See d'Herbelot, Bibliotheque Orientale, p. 139; and Renaudot, Hist. Patriarch. Alexandrin. p. 39, 40.

[c] Paul, the deacon of Aquileia (de Gestis Langobardorum, l. i, c. 4, p. 745, 746, edit. Grot.), who lived towards the end of the eighth century, has placed in a cavern under a rock, on the shore of the ocean, the Seven Sleepers of the North, whose long repose was respected by the barbarians. Their dress declared them to be Romans; and the deacon conjectures, that they were reserved by Providence as the future apostles of those unbelieving countries.

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display the *new* world to the eyes of a spectator, who still retained a lively and recent impression of the *old*, his surprise and his reflections would furnish the pleasing subject of a philosophical romance. The scene could not be more advantageously placed, than in the two centuries which elapsed between the reigns of Decius and of Theodosius the younger. During this period, the seat of government had been transported from Rome to a new city on the banks of the Thracian Bosphorus; and the abuse of military spirit had been suppressed, by an artificial system of tame and ceremonious servitude. The throne of the persecuting Decius was filled by a succession of christian and orthodox princes, who had extirpated the fabulous gods of antiquity; and the public devotion of the age was impatient to exalt the saints and martyrs of the catholic church, on the altars of Diana and Hercules. The union of the Roman empire was dissolved: its genius was humbled in the dust; and armies of unknown barbarians, issuing from the frozen regions of the North, had established their victorious reign over the fairest provinces of Europe and Africa.

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The character, conquests, and court of Attila, king of the Huns—Death of Theodosius the Younger—Elevation of Marcian to the empire of the East.

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The Huns, A. D. 376-433.

The western world was oppressed by the Goths and Vandals, who fled before the Huns; but the achievements of the Huns themselves were not adequate to their power and prosperity. Their victorious hordes had spread from the Volga to the Danube; but the public force was exhausted by the discord of independent chieftains; their valour was idly consumed in obscure and predatory excursions; and they often degraded their national dignity, by condescending, for the hopes of spoil, to enlist under the banners of their fugitive enemies. In the reign of ATTILA,[n] the Huns again became the terror of

[n] The authentic materials for the history of Attila may be found in Jornandes (de Rebus Geticis, c. 34–50, p. 660–688, edit. Grot.), and Priscus (Excerpta de Legationibus, p. 33-76, Paris, 1648). I have not seen the lives of Attila, composed by Juvencus Cælius Calanus Dalmatinus, in the twelfth century; or by Nicholas Olahus, archbishop of Gran, in the sixteenth. See Mascou's History of the Germans, ix, 23, and Maffei Osservazioni Litterarie, tom. i, p. 83, 89. Whatever the modern Hungarians have added must be fabulous; and they do not seem to have excelled in the art of fiction. They suppose, that when Attila invaded Gaul and Italy, married innumerable wives, &c. he was one hundred and twenty years of age. Thwrocz Chron. p. i, c. 22, in Script. Hungar. tom. i, p. 76.

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the world; and I shall now describe the character and actions of that formidable barbarian; who alternately insulted and invaded the East and the West, and urged the rapid downfal of the Roman empire.

Their establishment in modern Hungary.

In the tide of emigration, which impetuously rolled from the confines of China to those of Germany, the most powerful and populous tribes may commonly be found on the verge of the Roman provinces. The accumulated weight was sustained for a while by artificial barriers; and the easy condescension of the emperors invited, without satisfying, the insolent demands of the barbarians, who had acquired an eager appetite for the luxuries of civilized life. The Hungarians, who ambitiously insert the name of Attila among their native kings, may affirm with truth, that the hordes, which were subject to his uncle Roas, or Rugilas, had formed their encampments within the limits of modern Hungary,[h] in a fertile country, which liberally supplied the wants of a nation of hunters and shepherds. In this advantageous situation, Rugilas, and his valiant brothers, who continually added to their power and reputation, commanded the alternative

[h] Hungary has been successively occupied by three Scythian colonies. 1. The Huns of Attila; 2. The Abares, in the sixth century; and, 3. The Turks of Magiars, A. D. 889; the immediate and genuine ancestors of the modern Hungarians, whose connection with the two former is extremely faint and remote. The *Prodromus* and *Notitia* of Matthew Belius appear to contain a rich fund of information concerning ancient and modern Hungary. I have seen the extracts in Bibliotheque Ancienne et Moderne, tom. xxii, p. 1-51, and Bibliotheque Raisonnée, tom. xvi, p. 127-175.

of peace or war with the two empires. His alliance with the Romans of the West was cemented by his personal friendship for the great Ætius; who was always secure of finding, in the barbarian camp, a hospitable reception, and a powerful support. At his solicitation, and in the name of John the usurper, sixty thousand Huns advanced to the confines of Italy; their march and their retreat were alike expensive to the state; and the grateful policy of Ætius abandoned the possession of Pannonia to his faithful confederates. The Romans of the East were not less apprehensive of the arms of Rugilas, which threatened the provinces, or even the capital. Some ecclesiastical historians have destroyed the barbarians with lightning and pestilence;[c] but Theodosius was reduced to the more humble expedient of stipulating an annual payment of three hundred and fifty pounds of gold, and of disguising this dishonourable tribute by the title of general, which the king of the Huns condescended to accept. The public tranquillity was frequently interrupted by the fierce impatience of the barbarians, and the perfidious intrigues of the Byzantine court. Four dependent nations, among whom we may distinguish the Bavarians, disclaimed the sovereignty of the Huns; and their revolt was encouraged and protected by a Ro-

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[c] Socrates, l. vii, c. 43. Theodoret, l. v, c. 36. Tillemont, who always depends on the faith of his ecclesiastical authors, strenuously contends (Hist. des Emp. tom. vi, p. 136, 607), that the wars and personages were not the same.

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man alliance; till the just claims, and formidable power, of Rugilas, were effectually urged by the voice of Eslaw his ambassador. Peace was the unanimous wish of the senate: their decree was ratified by the emperor; and two ambassadors were named, Plinthas, a general of Scythian extraction, but of consular rank; and the questor Epigenes, a wise and experienced statesman, who was recommended to that office by his ambitious colleague.

Reign of Attila, A. D. 433-453.

The death of Rugilas suspended the progress of the treaty. His two nephews, Attila and Bleda, who succeeded to the throne of their uncle, consented to a personal interview with the ambassadors of Constantinople; but as they proudly refused to dismount, the business was transacted on horseback, in a spacious plain in the city of Margus, in the Upper Mæsia. The kings of the Huns assumed the solid benefits, as well as the vain honours, of the negotiation. They dictated the conditions of peace, and each condition was an insult on the majesty of the empire. Besides the freedom of a safe and plentiful market on the banks of the Danube, they required that the annual contribution should be augmented from three hundred and fifty to seven hundred pounds of gold; that a fine or ransom, of eight pieces of gold, should be paid for every Roman captive, who had escaped from his barbarian master; that the emperor should renounce all treaties and engagements with the enemies of the Huns; and that all the fugitives who had taken refuge in the court, or provinces, of Theo-

dosius, should be delivered to the justice of their offended sovereign. This justice was rigorously inflicted on some unfortunate youths of a royal race. They were crucified on the territories of the empire, by the command of Attila: and, as soon as the king of the Huns had impressed the Romans with the terror of his name, he indulged them in a short and arbitrary respite, whilst he subdued the rebellious or independent nations of Scythia and Germany.[e]

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His figure and character;

Attila, the son of Mundzuk, deduced his noble, perhaps his regal, descent[e] from the ancient Huns, who had formerly contended with the monarchs of China. His features, according to the observation of a Gothic historian, bore the stamp of his national origin; and the portrait of Attila exhibits the genuine deformity of a modern Calmuck;[f] a large head, a swarthy complexion, small deep-seated eyes, a flat nose, a few hairs in the place of a beard, broad shoulders, and a short square body, of nervous strength, though of a disproportioned form. The haughty step and demeanour of the king of the Huns expressed the consciousness of his superiority above the rest of mankind; and he had a custom of

[d] See Priscus, p. 47, 48, and Hist. des Peuples de l'Europe, tom. vii, c. xii, xiii, xiv, xv.

[e] Priscus, p. 39. The modern Hungarians have deduced his genealogy, which ascends, in the thirty-fifth degree, to Ham the son of Noah: yet they are ignorant of his father's real name (de Guignes, Hist. des Huns, tom. ii, p. 297).

[f] Compare Jornandes (c. 35, p. 661) with Buffon, Hist. Naturelle, tom. iii, p. 380. The former had a right to observe, originis suæ signa restituens. The character and portrait of Attila are probably transcribed from Cassiodorius.

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fiercely rolling his eyes, as if he wished to enjoy the terror which he inspired. Yet this savage hero was not inaccesible to pity: his suppliant enemies might confide in the assurance of peace or pardon; and Attila was considered by his subjects as a just and indulgent master. He delighted in war; but, after he had ascended the throne in a mature age, his head, rather than his hand, achieved the conquest of the North; and the fame of an adventurous soldier was usefully exchanged for that of a prudent and successful general. The effects of personal valour are so inconsiderable, except in poetry or romance, that victory, even among barbarians, must depend on the degree of skill, with which the passions of the multitude are combined and guided for the service of a single man. The Scythian conquerors, Attila and Zingis, surpassed their rude countrymen in art, rather than in courage; and it may be observed, that the monarchies, both of the Huns and of the Moguls, were erected by their founders on the basis of popular superstition. The miraculous conception, which fraud and credulity ascribed to the virgin mother of Zingis, raised him above the level of human nature; and the naked prophet, who, in the name of the Deity, invested him with the empire of the earth, pointed the valour of the Moguls with irresistible enthusiasm.[s] The religious arts of At-

[s] Abulpharag. Dynast. vers. Pocock, p. 281. Genealogical History of the Tartars, by Abulghazi Bahadar Khan, part iii, c. 15; part iv, c. 3. Vie de Gengiscan, par Petit de la Croix, l. i, c. 1, 6. The

tila were not less skilfully adapted to the character of his age and country. It was natural enough that the Scythians should adore, with peculiar devotion, the god of war: but as they were incapable of forming either an abstract idea, or a corporeal representation, they worshipped their tutelar deity under the symbol of an iron scymitar.[h] One of the shepherds of the Huns perceived, that a heifer, who was grazing, had wounded herself in the foot, and curiously followed the track of the blood, till he discovered, among the long grass, the point of an ancient sword; which he dug out of the ground, and presented to Attila. That magnanimous, or rather that artful, prince accepted, with pious gratitude, this celestial favour; and, as the rightful possessor of the *sword of Mars*, asserted his divine and indefeasible claim to the dominion of the earth.[i] If the rights of Scythia were practised on this solemn occasion, a lofty altar, or rather pile of faggots, three hundred yards in length and in

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He discovers the sword of Mars;

relations of the missionaries, who visited Tartary in the thirteenth century (see the seventh volume of the Histoire des Voyages), express the popular language and opinions; Zingis is styled the Son of God, &c. &c.

[h] Nec templum apud eos visitur, aut delubrum, ne tugurium quidem culmo tectum cerni usquam potest; sed *gladius* barbarico ritû humi figitur nudus, eumque ut Martem regionum quas circumcircant præsulem vericundius colunt. Ammian. Marcellin. xxxi, 2, and the learned notes of Lindenbrogius and Valesius.

[i] Priscus relates this remarkable story, both in his own text (p. 65), and in the quotation made by Jornandes (c. 35, p. 662). He might have explained the tradition, or fable, which characterized this famous sword, and the name as well as attributes of the Scythian deity, whom he has translated into the Mars of the Greeks and Romans.

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breadth, was raised in a spacious plain; and the sword of Mars was placed erect on the summit of this rustic altar, which was annually consecrated by the blood of sheep, horses, and of the hundredth captive.[k] Whether human sacrifices formed any part of the worship of Attila, or, whether he propitiated the god of war with the victims which he continually offered in the field of battle, the favourite of Mars soon acquired a sacred character, which rendered his conquests more easy and more permanent; and the barbarian princes confessed, in the language of devotion or flattery, that they could not presume to gaze, with a steady eye, on the divine majesty of the king of the Huns.[l] His brother Bleda, who reigned over a considerable part of the nation, was compelled to resign his sceptre, and his life. Yet even this cruel act was attributed to a supernatural impulse; and the vigour with which Attila wielded the sword of Mars, convinced the world that it had been reserved alone for his invincible arm.[m] But the extent of his empire affords the only remaining evidence of the num-

[k] Herodot. l. iv. c. 62. For the sake of economy, I have calculated by the smallest stadium. In the human sacrifices, they cut off the shoulder and arm of the victim, which they threw up into the air, and drew omens and presages from the manner of their falling on the pile.

[l] Priscus, p. 55. A more civilized hero, Augustus himself, was pleased, if the person on whom he fixed his eyes seemed unable to support their divine lustre. Sueton. in August. c. 79.

[m] The count de Buat (Hist. des Peuples de l'Europe, tom. vii, p. 428, 429) attempts to clear Attila from the murder of his brother; and is almost inclined to reject the concurrent testimony of Jornandes, and the contemporary Chronicles.

ber, and importance, of his victories; and the Scythian monarch, however ignorant of the value of science and philosophy, might, perhaps, lament that his illiterate subjects were destitute of the art which could perpetuate the memory of his exploits. CHAP. XXXIV.

and acquires the empire of Scythia and Germany.

If a line of separation were drawn between the civilized and the savage climates of the globe; between the inhabitants of cities, who cultivated the earth, and the hunters and shepherds, who dwelt in tents; Attila might aspire to the title of supreme and sole monarch of the barbarians.[n] He alone, among the conquerors of ancient and modern times, united the two mighty kingdoms of Germany and Scythia; and those vague appellations, when they are applied to his reign, may be understood with an ample latitude. Thuringia, which stretched beyond its actual limits as far as the Danube, was in the number of his provinces: he interposed, with the weight of a powerful neighbour, in the domestic affairs of the Franks; and one of his lieutenants chastised, and almost exterminated, the Burgundians of the Rhine. He subdued the islands of the ocean, the kingdoms of Scandinavia, encompassed and divided by the waters of the Baltic; and the Huns might derive a tribute of furs from that northern region, which has been protected from all other

[n] Fortissimarum gentium dominus, qui inauditâ ante se potentiâ, solus Scythica et Germanica regna possedit. Jornandes, c. 49, p. 684. Priscus, p. 64, 65. M. de Guignes, by his knowledge of the Chinese, has acquired (tom. ii, p. 295-301) an adequate idea of the empire of Attila.

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conquerors by the severity of the climate, and the courage of the natives. Towards the east, it is difficult to circumscribe the dominion of Attila over the Scythian deserts; yet we may be assured, that he reigned on the banks of the Volga; that the king of the Huns was dreaded, not only as a warrior, but as a magician;[n] that he insulted and vanquished the Khan of the formidable Geougen; and that he sent ambassadors to negotiate an equal alliance with the empire of China. In the proud review of the nations who acknowledged the sovereignty of Attila, and who never entertained, during his life-time, the thought of a revolt, the Gepidæ and the Ostrogoths were distinguished by their numbers, their bravery, and the personal merit of their chiefs. The renowned Ardaric, king of the Gepidæ, was the faithful and sagacious counsellor of the monarch, who esteemed his intrepid genius, whilst he loved the mild and discreet virtues of the noble Walamir, king of the Ostrogoths. The crowd of vulgar kings, the leaders of so many martial tribes, who served under the standard of Attila, were ranged in the submissive order of guards and domestics, round the person of their master. They watched his nod; they trembled at his frown; and at the first signal of his will,

[n] See Hist. des Huns, tom. ii, p. 296. The Geougen believed, that the Huns could excite, at pleasure, storms of wind and rain. This phenomenon was produced by the stone *Gezi*; to whose magic power the loss of a battle was ascribed by the Mahometan Tartars of the fourteenth century. See Chereffeddin Ali, Hist. de Timur Bec, tom. i, p. 82, 83.

they executed, without murmur or hesitation, his stern and absolute commands. In time of peace, the dependent princes, with their national troops, attended the royal camp in regular succession; but when Attila collected his military force, he was able to bring into the field an army of five, or, according to another account, of seven hundred thousand barbarians.[p]

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The ambassadors of the Huns might awaken the attention of Theodosius, by reminding him, that they were his neighbours both in Europe and Asia; since they touched the Danube on one hand, and reached, with the other, as far as the Tanais. In the reign of his father Arcadius, a band of adventurous Huns had ravaged the provinces of the East; from whence they brought away rich spoils and innumerable captives.[q] They

The Huns invade Persia, A. D. 430-440.

[p] Jornandes, c. 35, p. 661; c. 37, p. 667. See Tillemont, Hist. des Empereurs, tom. vi, p. 129, 138. Corneille has represented the pride of Attila to his subject kings; and his tragedy opens with these two ridiculous lines:—

Ils ne sont pas venus, nos deux rois! qu'on leur die
Qu'ils se font trop attendre, et qu' Attila s'ennuie.

The two kings of the Gepidæ and the Ostrogoths are profound politicians and sentimental lovers; and the whole piece exhibits the defects, without the genius, of the poet.

[q] ——alii per Caspia claustra
Armeniasque nives, inopino tramite ducti
Invadunt Orientes opes: jam pascua fumant
Cappodocum, volucrumque parens Argæus equorum.
Jam rubet altus Halys, nec se defendit iniquo
Monte Cilix; Syriæ tractus vastantur amæni;
Assuetumque choris et lætâ plebe canorum
Proterit imbellem sonipes hostilis Orontem.
Claudian, in Rufin. l. ii, 28-35.

See likewise, in Eutrop. l. i, 243-251, and the strong description of Jerom, who wrote from his feelings, tom. i, p. 26, ad Heliodor. p. 220, ad Ocean. Philostorgius (l. ix, c. 8) mentions this irruption.

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advanced, by a secret path, along the shores of the Caspian sea; traversed the snowy mountain of Armenia; passed the Tigris, the Euphrates, and the Halys; recruited their weary cavalry with the generous breed of Cappadocian horses; occupied the hilly country of Cilicia, and disturbed the festal songs and dances of the citizens of Antioch. Egypt trembled at their approach; and the monks and pilgrims of the Holy Land prepared to escape their fury by a speedy embarkation. The memory of this invasion was still recent in the minds of the Orientals. The subjects of Attila might execute, with superior forces, the design which these adventurers had so boldly attempted; and it soon became the subject of anxious conjecture, whether the tempest would fall on the dominions of Rome, or of Persia. Some of the great vassals of the king of the Huns, who were themselves in the rank of powerful princes, had been sent to ratify an alliance and society of arms with the emperor, or rather with the general, of the West. They related, during their residence at Rome, the circumstances of an expedition, which they had lately made into the East. After passing a desert and a morass, supposed by the Romans to be the lake Mœotis, they penetrated through the mountains, and arrived, at the end of fifteen days march, on the confines of Media; where they advanced as far as the unknown cities of Basic and Cursic. They encountered the Persian army in the plains of Media; and the air, according to their own ex-

pression, was darkened by a cloud of arrows. But the Huns were obliged to retire, before the numbers of the enemy. Their laborious retreat was effected by a different road; they lost the greatest part of their booty; and at length returned to the royal camp, with some knowledge of the country, and an impatient desire of revenge. In the free conversation of the imperial ambassadors, who discussed, at the court of Attila, the character and designs of their formidable enemy, the ministers of Constantinople expressed their hope, that his strength might be diverted and employed in a long and doubtful contest with the princes of the house of Sassan. The more sagacious Italians admonished their eastern brethren of the folly and danger of such a hope, and convinced them, *that* the Medes and Persians were incapable of resisting the arms of the Huns; and *that* the easy and important acquisition would exalt the pride, as well as power, of the conqueror. Instead of contenting himself with a moderate contribution, and a military title, which equalled him only to the generals of Theodosius, Attila would proceed to impose a disgraceful and intolerable yoke on the necks of the prostrate and captive Romans, who would then be encompassed, on all sides, by the empire of the Huns.[r]

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While the powers of Europe and Asia were solicitous to avert the impending danger, the alliance of Attila maintained the Vandals in the

They attack the eastern empire, A. D. 441, &c.

[r] See the original conversation in Priscus, p. 64, 65.

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possession of Africa. An enterprise had been concerted between the courts of Ravenna and Constantinople, for the recovery of that valuable province; and the ports of Sicily were already filled with the military and naval forces of Theodosius. But the subtle Genseric, who spread his negotiations round the world, prevented their designs, by exciting the king of the Huns to invade the eastern empire; and a trifling incident soon became the motive, or pretence, of a destructive war.[s] Under the faith of a treaty of Margus, a free market was held on the northern side of the Danube, which was protected by a Roman fortress, surnamed Constantia. A troop of barbarians violated the commercial security; killed, or dispersed, the unsuspecting traders; and levelled the fortress with the ground. The Huns justified this outrage as an act of reprisal; alleged, that the bishop of Margus had entered their territories, to discover and steal a secret treasure of their kings; and sternly demanded the guilty prelate, the sacrilegious spoil, and the fugitive subjects, who had escaped from the justice of Attila. The refusal of the Byzantine

[s] Priscus, p. 331. His history contained a copious and elegant account of the war (Evagrius, l. i, c. 17); but the extracts which relate to the embassies are the only parts that have reached our times. The original work was accessible, however, to the writers, from whom we borrow our imperfect knowledge, Jornandes, Theophanes, Count Marcellinus, Prosper-Tyro, and the author of the Alexandrian, or Paschal, Chronicle. M. de Buat. (Hist. des Peuples de l'Europe, tom. vii, c. xv), has examined the cause, the circumstances, and the duration, of this war; and will not allow it to extend beyond the year four hundred and forty-four.

court was the signal of war; and the Mœsians at first applauded the generous firmness of their sovereign. But they were soon intimidated by the destruction of Viminiacum and the adjacent towns; and the people was persuaded to adopt the convenient maxim, that a private citizen, however innocent or respectable, may be justly sacrificed to the safety of his country. The bishop of Margus, who did not possess the spirit of a martyr, resolved to prevent the designs which he suspected. He boldly treated with the princes of the Huns; secured, by solemn oaths, his pardon and reward; posted a numerous detachment of barbarians, in silent ambush, on the banks of the Danube; and, at the appointed hour, opened, with his own hand, the gates of his episcopal city. This advantage, which had been obtained by treachery, served as a prelude to more honourable and decisive victories. The Illyrian frontier was covered by a line of castles and fortresses; and though the greatest part of them consisted only of a single tower, with a small garrison, they were commonly sufficient to repel, or to intercept, the inroads of an enemy, who was ignorant of the art, and impatient of the delay, of a regular siege. But these slight obstacles were instantly swept away by the inundation of the Huns.[1] They destroyed, with fire and sword, the populous cities of Sirmium and Singidunum,

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[1] Procopius, de Edificiis, l. iv, c. 5. These fortresses were afterwards restored, strengthened, and enlarged by the emperor Justinian; but they were soon destroyed by the Abares, who succeeded to the power and possessions of the Huns.

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of Ratiaria, and Marcianapolis, of Naissus and Sardica; where every circumstance, in the discipline of the people, and the construction of the buildings, had been gradually adapted to the sole purpose of defence. The whole breadth of Europe, as it extends above five hundred miles from the Euxine to the Hadriatic, was at once invaded, and occupied, and desolated, by the myriads of barbarians whom Attila led into the field. The public danger and distress could not, however, provoke Theodosius to interrupt his amusements and devotion, or to appear in person at the head of the Roman legions. But the troops which had been sent against Genseric, were hastily recalled from Sicily; the garrisons, on the side of Persia, were exhausted; and a military force was collected in Europe, formidable by their arms and numbers, if the generals had understood the science of command, and their soldiers the duty of obedience. The armies of the eastern empire were vanquished in three successive engagements; and the progress of Attila may be traced by the fields of battle. The two former on the banks of the Utus, and under the walls of Marcianapolis, were fought in the extensive plains between the Danube and Mount Hæmus. As the Romans were pressed by a victorious enemy, they gradually, and unskilfully, retired towards the Chersonesus of Thrace; and that narrow peninsula, the last extremity of the land, was marked by their third, and irreparable, defeat. By the destruction of

and ravage Europe as far as Constantinople.

this army, Attila acquired the indisputable possession of the field. From the Hellespont to Thermopylæ, and the suburbs of Constantinople, he ravaged, without resistance, and without mercy, the provinces of Thrace and Macedonia. Heraclea and Hadrianople might, perhaps, escape this dreadful irruption of the Huns; but the words, the most expressive of total extirpation and erasure, are applied to the calamities which they inflicted on seventy cities[u] of the eastern empire.[x] Theodosius, his court, and the unwarlike people, were protected by the walls of Constantinople; but those walls had been shaken by a recent earthquake, and the fall of fifty-eight towers had opened a large and tremendous breach. The damage indeed was speedily repaired; but this accident was aggravated by a superstitious fear, that Heaven itself had delivered the imperial city to the shepherds of Scythia, who were strangers to the laws, the language, and the religion, of the Romans.[x]

The Scythian, or Tartar wars.

In all their invasions of the civilized empires of the South, the Scythian shepherds have been uniformly actuated by a savage and destructive spirit. The laws of war, that restrain the exercise

[u] Septuaginta civitates (says Prosper-Tyro) deprædatione vastatæ. The language of Count Marcellinus is still more forcible. Pene totam Europam, invasis *excisisque* civitatibus atque castellis, *conrasit*.

[x] Tillemont (Hist. des Empereurs, tom. vi, p. 106, 107) has paid great attention to this memorable earthquake; which was felt as far from Constantinople as Antioch and Alexandria, and is celebrated by all the ecclesiastical writers. In the hands of a popular preacher, an earthquake is an engine of admirable effect.

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of national rapine and murder, are founded on two principles of substantial interest; the knowledge of the permanent benefits which may be obtained by a moderate use of conquest; and a just apprehension, lest the desolation which we inflict on the enemy's country, may be retaliated on our own. But these considerations of hope and fear are almost unknown in the pastoral state of nations. The Huns of Attila may, without injustice, be compared to the Moguls and Tartars, before their primitive manners were changed by religion and luxury; and the evidence of oriental history may reflect some light on the short and imperfect annals of Rome. After the Moguls had subdued the northern provinces of China, it was seriously proposed, not in the hour of victory and passion, but in calm deliberate council, to exterminate all the inhabitants of that populous country, that the vacant land might be converted to the pasture of cattle. The firmness of a Chinese mandarin,[y] who insinuated some principles of rational policy into the mind of Zingis, diverted him from the execution of this horrid design. But in the cities of Asia, which yielded to the Moguls, the inhuman abuse of the rights of war was exercised, with a regular

[y] He represented to the emperor of the Moguls, that the four provinces (Petchell, Chantong, Chansi, and Leaotong) which he already possessed, might annually produce, under a mild administration, 500,000 ounces of silver, 400,000 measures of rice, and 800,000 pieces of silk. Gaubil. Hist. de la Dynastie de Mongous, p. 58, 59. Yelutchousay (such was the name of the mandarin) was a wise and virtuous minister, who saved his country, and civilized the conquerors. See p. 102, 103.

form of discipline, which may, with equal reason, though not with equal authority, be imputed to the victorious Huns. The inhabitants, who had submitted to their discretion, were ordered to evacuate their houses, and to assemble in some plain adjacent to the city; where a division was made of the vanquished into three parts. The first class consisted of the soldiers of the garrison, and of the young men capable of bearing arms; and their fate was instantly decided: they were either enlisted among the Moguls, or they were massacred on the spot by the troops, who, with pointed spears and bended bows, had formed a circle round the captive multitude. The second class, composed of the young and beautiful women, of the artificers of every rank and profession, and of the more wealthy or honourable citizens, from whom a private ransom might be expected, was distributed in equal or proportionable lots. The remainder, whose life or death was alike useless to the conquerors, were permitted to return to the city; which, in the meanwhile, had been stripped of its valuable furniture; and a tax was imposed on those wretched inhabitants for the indulgence of breathing their native air. Such was the behaviour of the Moguls, when they were not conscious of any extraordinary rigour.[z] But the most casual provocation, the slightest motive, of caprice or con-

[z] Particular instances would be endless; but the curious reader may consult the life of Gengiscan, by Petit de la Croix, the Histoire des Mongous, and the fifteenth book of the History of the Huns.

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venience, often provoked them to involve a whole people in an indiscriminate massacre: and the ruin of some flourishing cities was executed with such unrelenting perseverance, that, according to their own expression, horses might run, without stumbling, over the ground where they had once stood. The three great capitals of Khorasan, Maru, Neisabour, and Herat, were destroyed by the armies of Zingis; and the exact account, which was taken of the slain, amounted to four millions three hundred and forty-seven thousand persons.[a] Timur, or Tamerlane, was educated in a less barbarous age, and in the profession of the Mahometan religion: yet, if Attila equalled the hostile ravages of Tamerlane,[b] either the Tartar or the Hun might deserve the epithet of the SCOURGE OF GOD.[c]

[a] At Maru, 1,300,000; at Herat, 1,600,000; at Neisabour, 1,747,000. D'Herbelot, Bibliotheque Orientale, p. 380, 381. I use the orthography of d'Anville's maps. It must, however, be allowed, that the Persians were disposed to exaggerate their losses, and the Moguls to magnify their exploits.

[b] Chereffeddin Ali, his servile panegyrist, would afford us many horrid examples. In his camp before Delhi, Timur massacred 100,000 Indian prisoners, who had *smiled* when the army of their countrymen appeared in sight (Hist. de Timur Bec, tom. iii, p. 90). The people of Ispahan supplied 70,000 human sculls for the structure of several lofty towers (id. tom. i, p. 434). A similar tax was levied on the revolt of Bagdad (tom. iii, p. 370) and the exact account, which Chereffeddin was not able to procure from the proper officers, is stated by another historian (Ahmed Arabsiada, tom ii, p. 175, vers. Manger) at 90,000 heads.

[c] The ancients, Jornandes, Priscus, &c. are ignorant of this epithet. The modern Hungarians have imagined, that it was applied, by a hermit of Gaul, to Attila, who was pleased to insert it among the titles of his royal dignity. Mascou, ix, 23, and Tillemont, Hist. des Empereurs, tom. vi, p. 143.

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It may be affirmed with bolder assurance, that the Huns depopulated the provinces of the empire, by the number of Roman subjects whom they led away into captivity. In the hands of a wise legislator, such an industrious colony might have contributed to diffuse, through the deserts of Scythia, the rudiments of the useful and ornamental arts; but these captives, who had been taken in war, were accidentally dispersed among the hords that obeyed the empire of Attila. The estimate of their respective value was formed by the simple judgment of unenlightened and unprejudiced barbarians. Perhaps they might not understand the merit of a theologian, profoundly skilled in the controversies of the Trinity and the Incarnation; yet they respected the ministers of every religion; and the active zeal of the christian missionaries, without approaching the person, or the palace, of the monarch, successfully laboured in the propagation of the gospel.[a] The pastoral tribes, who were ignorant of the distinction of landed property, must have disregarded the use, as well as the abuse, of civil jurisprudence; and the skill of an eloquent lawyer could excite only their contempt, or their abhorrence.[a] The perpetual intercourse of the

State of the captives.

[a] The missionaries of St Chrysostom had converted great numbers of the Scythians, who dwelt beyond the Danube, in tents and waggons. Theodoret, l. v, c. 31, Photius, p. 1517. The Mahometans, the Nestorians, and the Latin Christians, thought themselves secure of gaining the sons and grandsons of Zingis, who treated the rival missionaries with impartial favour.

[a] The Germans, who exterminated Varus and his legions, had been

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Huns and the Goths had communicated the familiar knowledge of the two national dialects; and the barbarians were ambitious of conversing in Latin, the military idiom, even of the eastern empire.[f] But they disdained the language, and the sciences, of the Greeks; and the vain sophist, or grave philosopher, who had enjoyed the flattering applause of the schools, was mortified to find, that his robust servant was a captive of more value and importance than himself. The mechanic arts were encouraged and esteemed, as they tended to satisfy the wants of the Huns. An architect, in the service of Onegesius, one of the favourites of Attila, was employed to construct a bath; but this work was a rare example of private luxury; and the trades of the smith, the carpenter, the armourer, were much more adapted to supply a wandering people with the useful instruments of peace and war. But the merit of the physician was received with universal favour and respect; the barbarians, who despised death, might be apprehensive of disease; and the haughty conqueror trembled in the presence of a captive, to whom he ascribed, perhaps, an imaginary power, of prolonging, or

particularly offended with the Roman laws and lawyers. One of the barbarians, after the effectual precautions of cutting out the tongue of an advocate, and sewing up his mouth, observed, with much satisfaction, that the viper could no longer hiss. Florus, iv, 12.

[f] Priscus, p. 59. It should seem that the Huns preferred the Gothic and Latin languages to their own; which was probably of harsh and barren idiom.

preserving, his life.[g] The Huns might be provoked to insult the misery of their slaves, over whom they exercised a despotic command;[h] but their manners were not susceptible of a refined system of oppression; and the efforts of courage and diligence were often recompensed by the gift of freedom. The historian Priscus, whose embassy is a source of curious instruction, was accosted, in the camp of Attila, by a stranger, who saluted him in the Greek language, but whose dress and figure displayed the appearance of a wealthy Scythian. In the siege of Viminiacum, he had lost, according to his own account, his fortune and liberty: he became the slave of Onegesius; but his faithful services, against the Romans and the Acatzires, had gradually raised him to the rank of the native Huns; to whom he was attached by the domestic pledges of a new wife and several children. The spoils of war had restored and improved his private property; he was admitted to the table of his former lord; and the apostate Greek blessed the hour of his captivity, since it had been the in-

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[g] Philip de Comines, in his admirable picture of the last moments of Lewis XI. (Memoires, l. vi, c. 12), represents the insolence of his physician, who, in five months, extorted 54,000 crowns, and a rich bishopric, from the stern avaricious tyrant.

[h] Priscus (p. 61) extols the equity of the Roman laws, which protected the life of a slave. Occidere solent (says Tacitus of the Germans) non disciplinâ et severitate, sed impetu et irâ, ut inimicum, nisi quòd impune. De Moribus Germ. c. 25. The Heruli, who were the subjects of Attila, claimed, and exercised, the power of life and death over their slaves. See a remarkable instance in the second book of Agathias.

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troduction to an happy and independent state; which he held by the honourable tenure of military service. This reflection naturally produced a dispute on the advantages, and defects, of the Roman government, which was severely arraigned by the apostate, and defended by Priscus in a prolix and feeble declamation. The freedman of Onegesius exposed, in true and lively colours, the vices of a declining empire, of which he had so long been the victim; the cruel absurdity of the Roman princes, unable to protect their subjects against the public enemy, unwilling to trust them with arms for their own defence; the intolerable weight of taxes, rendered still more oppressive by the intricate or arbitrary modes of collection; the obscurity of numerous and contradictory laws; the tedious and expensive forms of judicial proceedings; the partial administration of justice; and the universal corruption, which increased the influence of the rich, and aggravated the misfortunes of the poor. A sentiment of patriotic sympathy was at length revived in the breast of the fortunate exile; and he lamented, with a flood of tears, the guilt or weakness of those magistrates, who had perverted the wisest and most salutary institutions.[i]

Treaty of peace between Attila and the eastern empire, A. D. 446.

The timid, or selfish, policy of the western Romans had abandoned the eastern empire to the Huns.[k] The loss of armies, and the want of

[i] See the whole conversation in Priscus, p. 59–62.

[k] Nova iterum Orienti assurgit ruina .... quum nulla ab Occidentalibus ferrentur auxilia. Prosper-Tyro composed his Chronicle in the West; and his observation implies a censure.

discipline, or virtue, were not supplied by the personal character of the monarch. Theodosius might still affect the style, as well as the title, of *Invincible Augustus;* but he was reduced to solicit the clemency of Attila, who imperiously dictated these harsh and humiliating conditions of peace. I. The emperor of the East resigned, by an express or tacit convention, an extensive and important territory, which stretched along the southern banks of the Danube, from Singidunum or Belgrade, as far as Novæ, in the diocese of Thrace. The breadth was defined by the vague computation of fifteen days journey; but, from the proposal of Attila, to remove the situation of the national market, it soon appeared, that he comprehended the ruined city of Naissus within the limits of his dominions. II. The king of the Huns required, and obtained, that his tribute or subsidy should be augmented from seven hundred pounds of gold to the annual sum of two thousand one hundred; and he stipulated the immediate payment of six thousand pounds of gold to defray the expences, or to expiate the guilt, of the war. One might imagine, that such a demand, which scarcely equalled the measure of private wealth, would have been readily discharged by the opulent empire of the East; and the public distress affords a remarkable proof of the impoverished, or at least of the disorderly, state of the finances. A large proportion of the taxes, extorted from the people, was detained and intercepted in their passage, through the

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foulest channels, to the treasury of Constantinople. The revenue was dissipated by Theodosius, and his favourites, in wasteful and profuse luxury; which was disguised by the names of imperial magnificence, or christian charity. The immediate supplies had been exhausted by the unforeseen necessity of military preparations. A personal contribution, rigorously, but capriciously, imposed on the members of the senatorian order, was the only expedient that could disarm, without loss of time, the impatient avarice of Attila: and the poverty of the nobles compelled them to adopt the scandalous resource of exposing to public auction the jewels of their wives, and the hereditary ornaments of their palaces.[1] III. The king of the Huns appears to have established, as a principle of national jurisprudence, that he could never lose the property, which he had once acquired, in the persons who had yielded either a voluntary, or reluctant, submission to his authority. From this principle he concluded, and the conclusions of Attila were irrevocable laws, that the Huns, who had been taken prisoners in war, should be released without delay, and without ransom; that every Roman captive, who had presumed to escape, should purchase his right to freedom at the price of twelve pieces of gold; and that

[1] According to the description, or rather invective, of Chrysostom, an auction of Byzantine luxury must have been very productive. Every wealthy house possessed a semicircular table of massy silver, such as two men could scarcely lift, a vase of solid gold of the weight of forty pounds, cups, dishes of the same metal, &c.

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all the barbarians, who had deserted the standard of Attila, should be restored, without any promise, or stipulation, of pardon. In the execution of this cruel and ignominious treaty, the imperial officers were forced to massacre several loyal and noble deserters, who refused to devote themselves to certain death; and the Romans forfeited all reasonable claims to the friendship of any Scythian people, by this public confession, that they were destitute either of faith, or power, to protect the suppliants, who had embraced the throne of Theodosius.[m]

Spirit of the Azimuntines.

The firmness of a single town, so obscure, that, except on this occasion, it has never been mentioned by any historian or geographer, exposed the disgrace of the emperor and empire. Azimus, or Azimuntium, a small city of Thrace on the Illyrian borders,[n] had been distinguished by the martial spirit of its youth, the skill and reputation of the leaders whom they had chosen, and their daring exploits against the innumerable host of the barbarians. Instead of tame-

[m] The articles of the treaty, expressed without much order or precision, may be found in Priscus (p. 34, 35, 36, 37, 53, &c.). Count Marcellinus dispenses some comfort, by observing, 1*st*, *That* Attila himself solicited the peace and presents, which he had formerly refused; and, 2*dly*, *That*, about the same time, the ambassadors of India presented a fine large tame tiger to the emperor Theodosius.

[n] Priscus, p. 35, 36. Among the hundred and eighty-two forts, or castles, of Thrace, enumerated by Procopius (de Edificiis, l. iv, c. xi, tom. ii, p. 92, edit. Paris), there is one of the name of *Esimontou*, whose position is doubtfully marked, in the neighbourhood of Anchialus, and the Euxine Sea. The name and walls of Azimuntium might subsist till the reign of Justinian; but the race of its brave defenders had been carefully extirpated by the jealousy of the Roman princes.

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ly expecting their approach, the Azimuntines attacked, in frequent and successful sallies, the troops of the Huns, who gradually declined the dangerous neighbourhood; rescued from their hands the spoil and the captives, and recruited their domestic force by the voluntary association of fugitives and deserters. After the conclusion of the treaty Attila still menaced the empire with implacable war, unless the Azimuntines were persuaded, or compelled, to comply with the conditions which their sovereign had accepted. The ministers of Theodosius confessed with shame, and with truth, that they no longer possessed any authority over a society of men, who so bravely asserted their natural independence; and the king of the Huns condescended to negotiate an equal exchange with the citizens of Azimus. They demanded the restitution of some shepherds, who, with their cattle, had been accidentally surprised. A strict, though fruitless, enquiry was allowed: but the Huns were obliged to swear, that they did not detain any prisoners belonging to the city, before they could recover two surviving countrymen, whom the Azimuntines had reserved as pledges for the safety of their lost companions. Attila, on his side, was satisfied, and deceived, by their solemn asseveration, that the rest of the captives had been put to the sword; and that it was their constant practice, immediately to dismiss the Romans and the deserters, who had obtained the security of the public faith. This prudent and officious dissimulation may be condemned, or excused, by the casuists, as they incline to the

rigid decree of St Augustin, or to the milder sentiment of St Jerom and St Chrysostom: but every soldier, every statesman, must acknowledge, that, if the race of the Azimuntines had been encouraged and multiplied, the barbarians would have ceased to trample on the majesty of the empire.[o]

Embassies from Attila to Constantinople.

It would have been strange, indeed, if Theodosius had purchased, by the loss of honour, a secure and solid tranquillity; or if his tameness had not invited the repetition of injuries. The Byzantine court was insulted by five or six successive embassies;[p] and the ministers of Attila were uniformly instructed to press the tardy or imperfect execution of the last treaty; to produce the names of fugitives and deserters, who were still protected by the empire; and to declare, with seeming moderation, that unless their sovereign obtained complete and immediate satisfaction, it would be impossible for him, were it even his wish, to check the resentment of his warlike tribes. Besides the motives of pride and interest, which might prompt the king of the Huns to continue this train of negotiation,

[o] The peevish dispute of St Jerom and St Augustin, who laboured, by different expedients, to reconcile the *seeming* quarrel of the two apostles St Peter and St Paul, depends on the solution of an important question (Middleton's Works, vol. ii, p. 5-10), which has been frequently agitated by catholic and protestant divines, and even by lawyers and philosophers of every age.

[p] Montesquieu (Considerations sur la Grandeur, &c. c. xix) has delineated, with a bold and easy pencil, some of the most striking circumstances of the pride of Attila, and the disgrace of the Romans. He deserves the praise of having read the fragments of Priscus, which have been too much disregarded.

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he was influenced by the less honourable view of enriching his favourites at the expence of his enemies. The imperial treasury was exhausted, to procure the friendly offices of the ambassadors, and their principal attendants, whose favourable report might conduce to the maintenance of peace. The barbarian monarch was flattered by the liberal reception of his ministers; he computed with pleasure the value and splendour of their gifts, rigorously exacted the performance of every promise, which would contribute to their private emolument, and treated as an important business of state, the marriage of his secretary Constantius.[1] That Gallic adventurer, who was recommended by Ætius to the king of the Huns, had engaged his service to the ministers of Constantinople, for the stipulated reward of a wealthy and noble wife; and the daughter of Count Saturninus was chosen to discharge the obligations of her country. The reluctance of the victim, some domestic troubles, and the unjust confiscation of her fortune, cooled the ardour of her interested lover; but he still demanded, in the name of Attila, an equivalent alliance; and after many ambiguous delays and excuses, the Byzantine court was compelled to sacrifice to this insolent stranger the widow of Armatius, whose birth, opulence, and beauty, placed her in the most illustrious rank of the

[1] See Priscus, p. 69, 71, 72, &c. I would fain believe that this adventurer was afterwards crucified by the order of Attila, on a suspicion of treasonable practices; but Priscus (p. 57) has too plainly distinguished *two* persons of the name of Constantius, who, from the similar events of their lives, might have been easily confounded.

Roman matrons. For these importunate and oppressive embassies, Attila claimed a suitable return: he weighed, with suspicious pride, the character and station of the imperial envoys; but he condescended to promise, that he would advance as far as Sardica, to receive any ministers who had been invested with the consular dignity. The council of Theodosius eluded this proposal, by representing the desolate and ruined condition of Sardica; and even ventured to insinuate, that every officer of the army or household was qualified to treat with the most powerful princes of Scythia. Maximin,[r] a respectable courtier, whose abilities had been long exercised in civil and military employments, accepted with reluctance the troublesome, and, perhaps, dangerous, commission of reconciling the angry spirit of the king of the Huns. His friend, the historian Priscus,[s] embraced the opportunity of observing the barbarian hero in the peaceful and domestic scenes of life; but the secret of the

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[r] In the Persian treaty concluded in the year 422, the wise and eloquent Maximin had been the assessor of Ardaburius (Socrates, l. vii, c. 20). When Marcian ascended the throne, the office of great chamberlain was bestowed on Maximin, who is ranked, in a public edict, among the four principal ministers of state (Novell. ad Calc. Cod. Theod. p. 31). He executed a civil and military commission in the eastern provinces; and his death was lamented by the savages of Æthiopia, whose incursions he had repressed. See Priscus, p. 40, 41.

[s] Priscus was a native of Panium in Thrace, and deserved, by his eloquence, an honourable place among the sophists of the age. His Byzantine history, which related to his own times, was comprised in seven books. See Fabricius, Bibliot. Græc. tom. vi, p. 235, 236. Notwithstanding the charitable judgment of the critics, I suspect that Priscus was a pagan.

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embassy, a fatal and guilty secret, was entrusted only to the interpreter Vigilius. The two last ambassadors of the Huns, Orestes, a noble subject of the Pannonian province, and Edecon, a valiant chieftain of the tribe of the Scyrri, returned at the same time from Constantinople to the royal camp. Their obscure names were afterwards illustrated by the extraordinary fortune and the contrast of their sons; the two servants of Attila became the fathers of the last Roman emperor of the West, and of the first barbarian king of Italy.

The embassy of Maximin to Attila, A. D. 448.

The ambassadors, who were followed by a numerous train of men and horses, made their first halt at Sardica, at the distance of three hundred and fifty miles, or thirteen days journey, from Constantinople. As the remains of Sardica were still included within the limits of the empire, it was incumbent on the Romans to exercise the duties of hospitality. They provided, with the assistance of the provincials, a sufficient number of sheep and oxen; and invited the Huns to a splendid, or, at least, a plentiful supper. But the harmony of the entertainment was soon disturbed by mutual prejudice and indiscretion. The greatness of the emperor and the empire was warmly maintained by their ministers; the Huns, with equal ardour, asserted the superiority of their victorious monarch: the dispute was inflamed by the rash and unseasonable flattery of Vigilius, who passionately rejected the comparison of a mere mortal with the divine Theodosius; and it was with extreme difficulty that Maximin and Priscus

were able to divert the conversation, or to sooth the angry minds, of the barbarians. When they rose from table, the imperial ambassador presented Edecon and Orestes with rich gifts of silk robes and Indian pearls, which they thankfully accepted. Yet Orestes could not forbear insinuating, that *he* had not always been treated with such respect and liberality: and the offensive distinction which was implied, between his civil office and the hereditary rank of his colleague, seems to have made Edecon a doubtful friend, and Orestes an irreconcilable enemy. After this entertainment, they travelled about one hundred miles from Sardica to Naissus. That flourishing city, which had given birth to the great Constantine, was levelled with the ground: the inhabitants were destroyed or dispersed; and the appearance of some sick persons, who were still permitted to exist among the ruins of the churches, served only to increase the horror of the prospect. The surface of the country was covered with the bones of the slain; and the ambassadors, who directed their course to the north-west, were obliged to pass the hills of modern Servia, before they descended into the flat and marshy grounds, which are terminated by the Danube. The Huns were masters of the great river: their navigation was performed in large canoes, hollowed out of the trunk of a single tree; the ministers of Theodosius were safely landed on the opposite bank: and their barbarian associates immediately hastened to the camp of Attila, which was equally prepared for

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the amusements of hunting, or of war. No sooner had Maximin advanced about two miles from the Danube, than he began to experience the fastidious insolence of the conqueror. He was sternly forbid to pitch his tents in a pleasant valley, lest he should infringe the distant awe that was due to the royal mansion. The ministers of Attila pressed him to communicate the business, and the instructions, which he reserved for the ear of their sovereign. When Maximin temperately urged the contrary practice of nations, he was still more confounded to find, that the resolutions of the Sacred Consistory, those secrets (says Priscus) which should not be revealed to the gods themselves, had been treacherously disclosed to the public enemy. On his refusal to comply with such ignominious terms, the imperial envoy was commanded instantly to depart; the order was recalled; it was again repeated; and the Huns renewed their ineffectual attempts to subdue the patient firmness of Maximin. At length, by the intercession of Scotta, the brother of Ogenesius, whose friendship had been purchased by a liberal gift, he was admitted to the royal presence; but, instead of obtaining a decisive answer, he was compelled to undertake a remote journey towards the north, that Attila might enjoy the proud satisfaction of receiving, in the same camp, the ambassadors of the eastern and western empires. His journey was regulated by the guides, who obliged him to halt, to hasten his march, or to deviate from the common road, as it best suited the convenience

of the king. The Romans who traversed the plains of Hungary, suppose that they passed *several* navigable rivers, either in canoes or portable boats; but there is reason to suspect, that the winding stream of the Teyss, or Tibiscus, might present itself in different places, under different names. From the contiguous villages they received a plentiful and regular supply of provisions; mead instead of wine, millet in the place of bread, and a certain liquor named *camus*, which, according to the report of Priscus, was distilled from barley.[t] Such fare might appear coarse and indelicate to men who had tasted the luxury of Constantinople: but, in their accidental distress, they were relieved by the gentleness and hospitality of the same barbarians, so terrible and so merciless in war. The ambassadors had encamped on the edge of a large morass. A violent tempest of wind and rain, of thunder and lightning, overturned their tents, immersed their baggage and furniture in the water, and scattered their retinue, who wandered in the darkness of the night, uncertain of their road, and apprehensive of some unknown danger, till they awakened by their cries the inhabitants of a neighbouring village, the property of the widow of Bleda. A bright illumination,

[t] The Huns themselves still continued to despise the labours of agriculture; they abused the privilege of a victorious nation; and the Goths, their industrious subjects who cultivated the earth, dreaded their neighbourhood, like that of so many ravenous wolves (Priscus, p. 45). In the same manner the Sarts and Tadgics provide for their own subsistence, and for that of the Usbec Tartars, their lazy and rapacious sovereigns. See Genealogical History of the Tartars, p. 423, 455, &c.

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and, in a few moments, a comfortable fire of reeds, was kindled by their officious benevolence: the wants, and even the desires, of the Romans were liberally satisfied; and they seem to have been embarrassed by the singular politeness of Bleda's widow, who added to her other favours the gift, or at least the loan, of a sufficient number of beautiful and obsequious damsels. The sunshine of the succeeding day was dedicated to repose; to collect and dry the baggage, and to the refreshment of the men and horses; but, in the evening, before they pursued their journey, the ambassadors expressed their gratitude to the bounteous lady of the village, by a very acceptable present of silver cups, red fleeces, dried fruits, and Indian pepper. Soon after this adventure, they rejoined the march of Attila, from whom they had been separated about six days; and slowly proceeded to the capital of an empire, which did not contain, in the space of several thousand miles, a single city.

The royal village and palace.

As far as we may ascertain the vague and obscure geography of Priscus, this capital appears to have been seated between the Danube, the Teyss, and the Carpathian hills, in the plains of Upper Hungary, and most probably in the neighbourhood of Jazberin, Agria, or Tokay.[u] In

[u] It is evident, that Priscus passed the Danube and the Teyss, and that he did not reach the foot of the Carpathian hills. Agria, Tokay, and Jazberin, are situated in the plains circumscribed by this definition. M. de Buat (Histoire des Peuples, &c. tom. vii, p. 461) has chosen Tokay; Otrokosci (p. 180, apud Mascou, ix, 23), a learned Hungarian, has preferred Jazberin, a place about thirty-six miles westward of Buda and the Danube.

its origin it could be no more than an accidental camp, which, by the long and frequent residence of Attila, had insensibly swelled into a huge village, for the reception of his court, of the troops who followed his person, and of the various multitude of idle or industrious slaves and retainers.[x] The baths, constructed by Onegesius, were the only edifice of stone; the materials had been transported from Pannonia; and since the adjacent country was destitute even of large timber, it may be presumed, that the meaner habitations of the royal village consisted of straw, of mud, or of canvass. The wooden houses of the more illustrious Huns, were built and adorned with rude magnificence, according to the rank, the fortune, or the taste of the proprietors. They seem to have been distributed with some degree of order and symmetry; and each spot became more honourable as it approached the person of the sovereign. The palace of Attila, which surpassed all other houses in his dominions, was built entirely of wood, and covered an ample space of ground. The outward inclosure was a lofty wall, or pallisade, of smooth square timber, intersected with high towers, but intended rather for ornament than defence. This wall,

[x] The royal village of Attila may be compared to the city of Karacorum, the residence of the successors of Zingis; which, though it appears to have been a more stable habitation, did not equal the size or splendour of the town and Abbey of St Denys, in the 13th century (see Rubruquis, in the Histoire Generale des Voyages, tom. vii, p. 286). The camp of Aurengzebe, as it is so agreeably described by Bernier (tom. ii, p. 217-235), blended the manners of Scythia with the magnificence and luxury of Hindostan.

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which seems to have encircled the declivity of a hill, comprehended a great variety of wooden edifices, adapted to the uses of royalty. A separate house was assigned to each of the numerous wives of Attila; and, instead of the rigid and illiberal confinement imposed by Asiatic jealousy, they politely admitted the Roman ambassadors to their presence, their table, and even to the freedom of an innocent embrace. When Maximin offered his presents to Cerca, the principal queen, he admired the singular architecture of her mansion, the height of the round columns, the size and beauty of the wood, which was curiously shaped, or turned, or polished, or carved; and his attentive eye was able to discover some taste in the ornaments, and some regularity in the proportions. After passing through the guards who watched before the gate, the ambassadors were introduced into the private apartment of Cerca. The wife of Attila received their visit sitting, or rather lying, on a soft couch; the floor was covered with a carpet; the domestics formed a circle round the queen; and her damsels, seated on the ground, were employed in working the variegated embroidery which adorned the dress of the barbaric warriors. The Huns were ambitious of displaying those riches which were the fruit and evidence of their victories: the trappings of their horses, their swords, and even their shoes, were studded with gold and precious stones; and their tables were profusely spread with plates and goblets, and vases of gold and silver, which had been fashioned by the la-

bour of Grecian artists. The monarch alone assumed the superior pride of still adhering to the simplicity of his Scythian ancestors.[7] The dress of Attila, his arms, and the furniture of his horse, were plain, without ornament, and of a single colour. The royal table was served in wooden cups and platters; flesh was his only food; and the conqueror of the North never tasted the luxury of bread. CHAP. XXXIV.

The behaviour of Attila to the Roman ambassadors.

When Attila first gave audience to the Roman ambassadors on the banks of the Danube, his tent was encompassed with a formidable guard. The monarch himself was seated in a wooden chair. His stern countenance, angry gestures, and impatient tone, astonished the firmness of Maximin; but Vigilius had more reason to tremble, since he distinctly understood the menace, that if Attila did not respect the law of nations, he would nail the deceitful interpreter to a cross, and leave his body to the vultures. The barbarian condescended, by producing an accurate list, to expose the bold falsehood of Vigilius, who had affirmed that no more than seventeen deserters could be found. But he arrogantly declared, that he apprehended only the disgrace of contending with his fugitive slaves; since he despised their impotent efforts to defend the provinces which Theodosius had entrusted to their arms:

[7] When the Moguls displayed the spoils of Asia, in the diet of Toncat, the throne of Zingis was still covered with the original black felt carpet, on which he had been seated, when he was raised to the command of his warlike countrymen. See Vie de Gengiscan, l. iv, c. 9.

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"For what fortress," (added Attila), "what city, "in the wide extent of the Roman empire, can "hope to exist, secure and impregnable, if it "is our pleasure that it should be erazed from "the earth?" He dismissed, however, the interpreter, who returned to Constantinople with his peremptory demand of more complete restitution, and a more splendid embassy. His anger gradually subsided, and his domestic satisfaction, in a marriage which he celebrated on the road with the daughter of Eslam, might perhaps contribute to mollify the native fierceness of his temper. The entrance of Attila into the royal village, was marked by a very singular ceremony. A numerous troop of women came out to meet their hero and their king. They marched before him, distributed into long and regular files: the intervals between the files were filled by white veils of thin linen, which the women on either side bore aloft in their hands, and which formed a canopy for a chorus of young virgins, who chanted hymns and songs in the Scythian language. The wife of his favourite Onegesius, with a train of female attendants, saluted Attila at the door of her own house, on his way to the palace; and offered, according to the custom of the country, her respectful homage, by entreating him to taste the wine and meat, which she had prepared for his reception. As soon as the monarch had graciously accepted her hospitable gift, his domestics lifted a small silver table to a convenient height, as he sat on horseback; and Attila,

when he had touched the goblet with his lips, again saluted the wife of Onegesius, and continued his march. During his residence at the seat of empire, his hours were not wasted in the recluse idleness of a seraglio; and the king of the Huns could maintain his superior dignity, without concealing his person from the public view. He frequently assembled his council, and gave audience to the ambassadors of the nations; and his people might appeal to the supreme tribunal, which he held at stated times, and, according to the eastern custom, before the principal gate of his wooden palace. The Romans, both of the East and of the West, were twice invited to the banquets, where Attila feasted with the princes and nobles of Scythia. Maximin and his colleagues were stopped on the threshold, till they had made a devout libation to the health and prosperity of the king of the Huns; and were conducted, after this ceremony, to their respective seats in a spacious hall. The royal table and couch, covered with carpets and fine linen, was raised by several steps in the midst of the hall; and a son, an uncle, or perhaps a favourite king, were admitted to share the simple and homely repast of Attila. Two lines of small tables, each of which contained three or four guests, were ranged in order on either hand; the right was esteemed the most honourable, but the Romans ingenuously confess, that they were placed on the left; and that Beric, an unknown chieftain, most probably of the Gothic race, preceded the representatives of

The royal feast.

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of Theodosius and Valentinian. The barbarian monarch received from his cup-bearer a goblet filled with wine, and courteously drank to the health of the most distinguished guest; who rose from his seat, and expressed in the same manner his loyal and respectful vows. This ceremony was successively performed for all, or at least for the illustrious persons of the assembly; and a considerable time must have been consumed, since it was thrice repeated, as each course of service was placed on the table. But the wine still remained after the meat had been removed; and the Huns continued to indulge their intemperance long after the sober and decent ambassadors of the two empires had withdrawn themselves from the nocturnal banquet. Yet before they retired, they enjoyed a singular opportunity of observing the manners of the nation in their convivial amusements. Two Scythians stood before the couch of Attila, and recited the verses which they had composed, to celebrate his valour and his victories. A profound silence prevailed in the hall; and the attention of the guests was captivated by the vocal harmony, which revived and perpetuated the memory of their own exploits: a martial ardour flashed from the eyes of the warriors, who were impatient for battle; and the tears of the old men expressed their generous despair, that they could no longer partake the danger and glory of the field.* This entertainment, which might be

* If we may believe Plutarch (in Demetrio, tom. v, p. 24), it was the custom of the Scythians, when they indulged in the pleasures of the table, to awaken their languid courage by the martial harmony of twanging their bow-strings.

considered as a school of military virtue, was succeeded by a farce that debased the dignity of human nature. A Moorish and a Scythian buffoon successively excited the mirth of the rude spectators, by their deformed figure, ridiculous dress, antic gestures, absurd speeches, and the strange unintelligible confusion of the Latin, the Gothic, and the Hunnic languages; and the hall resounded with loud and licentious peals of laughter. In the midst of this intemperate riot, Attila alone, without a change of countenance, maintained his stedfast and inflexible gravity; which was never relaxed, except on the entrance of Irnac, the youngest of his sons: he embraced the boy with a smile of paternal tenderness, gently pinched him by the cheek, and betrayed a partial affection, which was justified by the assurance of his prophets, that Irnac would be the future support of his family and empire. Two days afterwards, the ambassadors received a second invitation; and they had reason to praise the politeness, as well as the hospitality, of Attila. The king of the Huns held a long and familiar conversation with Maximin; but his civility was interrupted by rude expressions, and haughty reproaches; and he was provoked, by a motive of interest, to support, with unbecoming zeal, the private claims of his secretary Constantius. "The emperor" (said Attila) "has long "promised him a rich wife; Constantius must "not be disappointed; nor should a Roman "emperor deserve the name of liar." On the

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third day, the ambassadors were dismissed; the freedom of several captives was granted, for a moderate ransom, to their pressing entreaties; and, besides the royal presents, they were permitted to accept, from each of the Scythian nobles, the honourable and useful gift of a horse. Maximin returned, by the same road, to Constantinople; and though he was involved in an accidental dispute with Beric, the new ambassador of Attila, he flattered himself that he had contributed, by the laborious journey, to confirm the peace and alliance of the two nations.[a]

Conspiracy of the Romans against the life of Attila.

But the Roman ambassador was ignorant of the treacherous design, which had been concealed under the mask of the public faith. The surprise and satisfaction of Edecon, when he contemplated the splendour of Constantinople, had encouraged the interpreter Vigilius to procure for him a secret interview with the eunuch Chrysaphius,[b] who governed the emperor and the empire. After some previous conversation, and a mutual oath of secrecy, the eunuch, who had not, from his

[a] The curious narrative of this embassy, which required few observations, and was not susceptible of any collateral evidence, may be found in Priscus, p. 49–70. But I have not confined myself to the same order; and I had previously extracted the historical circumstances, which were less intimately connected with the journey, and business, of the Roman ambassadors.

[b] M. de Tillemont has very properly given the succession of chamberlains, who reigned in the name of Theodosius. Chrysaphius was the last, and, according to the unanimous evidence of history, the worst of these favourites (see Hist. des Empereurs, tom. vi, p. 117–119. Mem. Eccles. tom. xv, p. 438). His partiality for his godfather, the heresiarch Eutyches, engaged him to persecute the orthodox party.

own feelings or experience, imbibed any exalted notions of ministerial virtue, ventured to propose the death of Attila, as an important service, by which Edecon might deserve a liberal share of the wealth and luxury which he admired. The ambassador of the Huns listened to the tempting offer; and professed, with apparent zeal, his ability, as well as readiness, to execute the bloody deed: the design was communicated to the master of the offices, and the devout Theodosius consented to the assassination of his invincible enemy. But this perfidious conspiracy was defeated by the dissimulation, or the repentance, of Edecon; and, though he might exaggerate his inward abhorrence for the treason, which he seemed to approve, he dexterously assumed the merit of an early and voluntary confession. If we *now* review the embassy of Maximin, and the behaviour of Attila, we must applaud the barbarian, who respected the laws of hospitality, and generously entertained and dismissed the minister of a prince who had conspired against his life. But the rashness of Vigilius will appear still more extraordinary, since he returned, conscious of his guilt and danger, to the royal camp, accompanied by his son, and carrying with him a weighty purse of gold, which the favourite eunuch had furnished, to satisfy the demands of Edecon, and to corrupt the fidelity of the guards. The interpreter was instantly seized, and dragged before the tribunal of Attila, where he asserted his innocence with specious firmness, till the

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threat of inflicting instant death on his son, extorted from him a sincere discovery of the criminal transaction. Under the name of ransom or confiscation, the rapacious king of the Huns accepted two hundred pounds of gold for the life of a traitor, whom he disdained to punish. He pointed his just indignation against a nobler object. His ambassadors Eslaw and Orestes were immediately dispatched to Constantinople, with a peremptory instruction, which it was much safer for them to execute than to disobey. They boldly entered the imperial presence, with the fatal purse hanging down from the neck of Orestes; who interrogated the eunuch Chrysaphius, as he stood beside the throne, whether he recognised the evidence of his guilt. But the office of reproof was reserved for the superior dignity of his colleague Eslaw, who gravely addressed the emperor of the East in the following words.—"Theodosius is the "son of an illustrious and respectable parent; "Attila likewise is descended from a noble race; "and *he* has supported, by his actions, the dig- "nity which he inherited from his father Mund- "zuk. But Theodosius has forfeited his pater- "nal honours, and, by consenting to pay tribute, "has degraded himself to the condition of a "slave. It is therefore just, that he should reve- "rence the man whom fortune and merit have "placed above him; instead of attempting, like "a wicked slave, clandestinely to conspire against "his master." The son of Arcadius, who was accustomed only to the voice of flattery, heard

He reprimands and forgives the emperor.

with astonishment the severe language of truth; he blushed and trembled; nor did he presume directly to refuse the head of Chrysaphius, which Eslaw and Orestes were instructed to demand. A solemn embassy, armed with full powers and magnificent gifts, was hastily sent to deprecate the wrath of Attila; and his pride was gratified by the choice of Nomius and Anatolius, two ministers of consular or patrician rank, of whom the one was great treasurer, and the other was master-general of the armies of the East. He condescended to meet these ambassadors on the banks of the river Drenco; and though he at first affected a stern and haughty demeanour, his anger was insensibly mollified by their eloquence and liberality. He condescended to pardon the emperor, the eunuch, and the interpreter; bound himself by an oath to observe the conditions of peace; released a great number of captives; abandoned the fugitives and deserters to their fate; and resigned a large territory to the south of the Danube, which he had already exhausted of its wealth and inhabitants. But this treaty was purchased at an expence which might have supported a vigorous and successful war; and the subjects of Theodosius were compelled to redeem the safety of a worthless favourite by oppressive taxes, which they would more cheerfully have paid for his destruction.[c]

[c] This secret conspiracy, and its important consequences, may be traced in the fragments of Priscus, p. 37, 38, 39, 54, 70, 71, 72. The chronology of that historian is not fixed by any precise date; but

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Theodosius the younger dies, A. D. 450, July 28;

The emperor Theodosius did not long survive the most humiliating circumstance of an inglorious life. As he was riding, or hunting, in the neighbourhood of Constantinople, he was thrown from his horse into the river Lycus: the spine of the back was injured by the fall; and he expired some days afterwards, in the fiftieth year of his age, and the forty-third of his reign.[d] His sister Pulcheria, whose authority had been controuled both in civil and ecclesiastical affairs by the pernicious influence of the eunuchs, was unanimously proclaimed empress of the East; and the Romans, for the first time, submitted to a female reign. No sooner had Pulcheria ascended the throne, than she indulged her own and the public resentment, by an act of popular justice. Without any legal trial, the eunuch Chrysaphius was executed before the gates of the city; and the immense riches which had been accumulated by the rapacious favourite, served only to hasten and to justify his punishment.[e] Amidst the general acclamations of the clergy and people, the empress did not forget the prejudice and disadvantage to which her sex was exposed; and she

the series of negotiations between Attila and the eastern empire must be included between the three or four years which are terminated A. D. 450, by the death of Theodosius.

[d] Theodorus the Reader (see Vales. Hist. Eccles. tom. iii, p. 563), and the Paschal Chronicle, mention the fall, without specifying the injury; but the consequence was so likely to happen, and so unlikely to be invented, that we may safely give credit to Nicephorus Callistus, a Greek of the fourteenth century.

[e] Pulcheriæ natû (says count Marcellinus) suâ cum avaritiâ interemptus est. She abandoned the eunuch to the pious revenge of a son, whose father had suffered at his instigation.

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wisely resolved to prevent their murmurs by the choice of a colleague, who would always respect the superior rank and virgin chastity of his wife. She gave her hand to Marcian, a senator, about sixty years of age, and the nominal husband of Pulcheria was solemnly invested with the imperial purple. The zeal which he displayed for the orthodox creed, as it was established by the council of Chalcedon, would alone have inspired the grateful eloquence of the catholics. But the behaviour of Marcian in a private life, and afterwards on the throne, may support a more rational belief, that he was qualified to restore and invigorate an empire, which had been almost dissolved by the successive weakness of two hereditary monarchs. He was born in Thrace, and educated to the profession of arms; but Marcian's youth had been severely exercised by poverty and misfortune, since his only resource, when he first arrived at Constantinople, consisted in two hundred pieces of gold, which he had borrowed of a friend. He passed nineteen years in the domestic and military service of Aspar, and his son Ardaburius; followed those powerful generals to the Persian and African wars; and obtained, by their influence, the honourable rank of tribune and senator. His mild disposition, and useful talents, without alarming the jealousy, recommended Marcian to the esteem and favour, of his patrons: he had seen, perhaps he had felt, the abuses of a venal and oppressive administration; and his own exam-

and is succeeded by Marcian, A.D. 25.

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ple gave weight and energy to the laws, which he promulgated for the reformation of manners.[f]

[f] Procopius, de Bell. Vandal. l. i, c. 4. Evagrius, l. ii, c. 1. Theophanes, p. 90, 91. Novel. ad Calcem. Cod. Theod. tom. vi, p. 30. The praises which St Leo and the catholics have bestowed on Marcian, are diligently transcribed by Baronius, as an encouragement for future princes.

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Invasion of Gaul by Attila—He is repulsed by Ætius and the Visigoths—Attila invades and evacuates Italy—The deaths of Attila, Ætius, and Valentinian III.

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Attila threatens both empires, and prepares to invade Gaul, A. D. 450.

It was the opinion of Marcian, that war should be avoided, as long as it is possible to preserve a secure and honourable peace; but it was likewise his opinion, that peace cannot be honourable or secure, if the sovereign betrays a pusillanimous aversion to war. This temperate courage dictated his reply to the demands of Attila, who insolently pressed the payment of the annual tribute. The emperor signified to the barbarians, that they must no longer insult the majesty of Rome by the mention of a tribute; that he was disposed to reward, with becoming liberality, the faithful friendship of his allies; but that, if they presumed to violate the public peace, they should feel that he possessed troops, and arms, and resolution, to repel their attacks. The same language, even in the camp of the Huns, was used by his ambassador Apollonius, whose bold refusal to deliver the presents, till he had been admitted to a personal interview, displayed a sense of dignity, and a contempt of danger, which Attila was not prepared to expect

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from the degenerate Romans.[a] He threatened to chastise the rash successor of Theodosius: but he hesitated whether he should first direct his invincible arms against the eastern or western empire. While mankind awaited his decision with awful suspense, he sent an equal defiance to the courts of Ravenna and Constantinople; and his ministers saluted the two emperors with the same haughty declaration. "Attila, *my* lord, "and *thy* lord, commands thee to provide a pa- "lace for his immediate reception."[b] But as the barbarian despised, or affected to despise, the Romans of the East, whom he had so often vanquished, he soon declared his resolution of suspending the easy conquest, till he had achieved a more glorious and important enterprise. In the memorable invasions of Gaul and Italy, the Huns were naturally attracted by the wealth and fertility of those provinces; but the particular motives and provocations of Attila, can only be explained by the state of the western empire under the reign of Valentinian, or, to speak more correctly, under the administration of Ætius.[c]

Character and administration of Ætius.

After the death of his rival Boniface, Ætius had prudently retired to the tents of the Huns;

[a] See Priscus, p. 39, 72.

[b] The Alexandrian or Paschal Chronicle, which introduces this haughty message, during the lifetime of Theodosius, may have anticipated the date; but the dull annalist was incapable of inventing the original and genuine style of Attila.

[c] The second book of the Histoire Critique de l'Etablissement de la Monarchie Françoise, tom. i, p. 189-424, throws great light on the state of Gaul, when it was invaded by Attila: but the ingenious author, the Abbé Dubos, too often bewilders himself in system and conjecture.

and he was indebted to their alliance for his safety and his restoration. Instead of the suppliant language of a guilty exile, he solicited his pardon at the head of sixty thousand barbarians; and the empress Placidia confessed, by a feeble resistance, that the condescension, which might have been ascribed to clemency, was the effect of weakness or fear. She delivered herself, her son Valentinian, and the western empire, into the hands of an insolent subject; nor could Placidia protect the son-in-law of Boniface, the virtuous and faithful Sebastian,[a] from the implacable persecution, which urged him from one kingdom to another, till he miserably perished in the service of the Vandals. The fortunate Ætius, who was immediately promoted to the rank of patrician, and thrice invested with the honours of the consulship, assumed, with the title of master of the cavalry and infantry, the whole military power of the state; and he is sometimes styled, by contemporary writers, the Duke, or General, of the Romans of the West. His prudence, rather than his virtue, engaged him to leave the grandson of Theodosius in the possession of the purple; and Valentinian was permitted to enjoy the peace

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[a] Victor Vitensis (de Persecut. Vandal. l. i, c. 6, p. 8, edit. Ruinart) calls him, acer consilio et strenuus in bello: but his courage, when he became unfortunate, was censured as desperate rashness; and Sebastian deserved, or obtained, the epithet of *præceps* (Sidon. Apollinar. Carmen. ix, 181). His adventures at Constantinople, in Sicily, Gaul, Spain, and Africa, are faintly marked in the Chronicles of Marcellinus and Idatius. In his distress, he was always followed by a numerous train; since he could ravage the Hellespont and Propontis, and seize the city of Barcelona.

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and luxury of Italy, while the patrician appeared in the glorious light of a hero and a patriot, who supported near twenty years the ruins of the western empire. The Gothic historian ingenuously confesses, that Ætius was born for the salvation of the Roman republic;[e] and the following portrait, though it is drawn in the fairest colours, must be allowed to contain a much larger proportion of truth than of flattery. "His "mother was a wealthy and noble Italian, and "his father Gaudentius, who held a distinguished "rank in the province of Scythia, gradually rose "from the station of a military *domestic*, to the "dignity of master of the cavalry. Their son, "who was enrolled almost in his infancy in the "guards, was given as a hostage, first to Alaric, "and afterwards to the Huns; and he successively obtained the civil and military honours "of the palace, for which he was equally qualified by superior merit. The graceful figure "of Ætius was not above the middle stature: "but his manly limbs were admirably formed "for strength, beauty, and agility; and he excelled in the martial exercises of managing a "horse, drawing the bow, and darting the javelin. He could patiently endure the want of "food or of sleep; and his mind and body were "alike capable of the most laborious efforts. "He possessed the genuine courage, that can "despise not only dangers but injuries; and it

[e] Reipublicæ Romanæ singulariter natus, qui superbiam Suevorum, Francorumque barbariem immensis cœdibus servire imperio Romano coegisset. Jornandes de Rebus Geticis, c. 34, p. 660.

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"was impossible either to corrupt, or deceive, "or intimidate, the firm integrity of his soul."[f] The barbarians, who had seated themselves in the western provinces, were insensibly taught to respect the faith and valour of the patrician Ætius. He soothed their passions, consulted their prejudices, balanced their interests, and checked their ambition. A seasonable treaty, which he concluded with Genseric, protected Italy from the depredations of the Vandals; the independent Britons implored and acknowledged his salutary aid: the imperial authority was restored and maintained in Gaul and Spain; and he compelled the Franks and the Suevi, whom he had vanquished in the field, to become the useful confederates of the republic.

His connection with the Huns and Alani.

From a principle of interest, as well as gratitude, Ætius assiduously cultivated the alliance of the Huns. While he resided in their tents as a hostage, or an exile, he had familiarly conversed with Attila himself, the nephew of his benefactor; and the two famous antagonists appear to have been connected by a personal and military friendship, which they afterwards confirmed by mutual gifts, frequent embassies, and the education of Carpilio, the son of Ætius, in the camp of Attila. By the specious professions of gratitude

[f] This portrait is drawn by Renatus Profuturus Frigeridus, a contemporary historian, known only by some extracts, which are preserved by Gregory of Tours (l. ii, c. 8, in tom. 2, p. 163). It was probably the duty, or at least the interest, of Renatus, to magnify the virtues of Ætius; but he would have shewn more dexterity, if he had not insisted on his patient, *forgiving* disposition.

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and voluntary attachment, the patrician might disguise his apprehensions of the Scythian conqueror, who pressed the two empires with his innumerable armies. His demands were obeyed or eluded. When he claimed the spoils of a vanquished city, some vases of gold, which had been fraudulently embezzled; the civil and military governors of Noricum were immediately dispatched to satisfy his complaints:[g] and it is evident, from their conversation with Maximin and Priscus, in the royal village, that the valour and prudence of Ætius had not saved the western Romans from the common ignominy of tribute. Yet his dexterous policy prolonged the advantages of a salutary peace; and a numerous army of Huns and Alani, whom he had attached to his person, was employed in the defence of Gaul. Two colonies of these barbarians were judiciously fixed in the territories of Valens and Orleans:[h] and their active cavalry secured the important

[g] The embassy consisted of Count Romulus; of Promotus, president of Noricum; and of Romanus, the military duke. They were accompanied by Tatullus, an illustrious citizen of Petovio, in the same province, and father of Orestes, who had married the daughter of Count Romulus. See Priscus, p. 57, 65. Cassiodorius (Variar. i, 4) mentions another embassy, which was executed by his father and Carpilio, the son of Ætius; and as Attila was no more, he could safely boast of their manly intrepid behaviour in his presence.

[h] Deserta Valentinæ urbis rura Alanis partienda traduntur. Prosper. Tyronis Chron. in Historiens de France, tom. i, p. 639. A few lines afterwards, Prosper observes, that lands in the *ulterior* Gaul were assigned to the Alani. Without admitting the correction of Dubos (tom. i, p. 300), the reasonable supposition of *two* colonies or garrisons of Alani, will confirm his arguments, and remove his objections.

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passages of the Rhone and of the Loire. These savage allies were not indeed less formidable to the subjects than to the enemies of Rome. Their original settlement was enforced with the licentious violence of conquest; and the province through which they marched, was exposed to all the calamities of an hostile invasion.[1] Strangers to the emperor or the republic, the Alani of Gaul were devoted to the ambition of Ætius; and though he might suspect, that, in a contest with Attila himself, they would revolt to the standard of their national king, the patrician laboured to restrain, rather than to excite, their zeal and resentment against the Goths, the Burgundians, and the Franks.

The Visigoths in Gaul under the reign of Theodoric, A. D. 419-451.

The kingdom established by the Visigoths in the southern provinces of Gaul, had gradually acquired strength and maturity; and the conduct of those ambitious barbarians, either in peace or war, engaged the perpetual vigilance of Ætius. After the death of Wallia, the Gothic sceptre devolved to Theodoric, the son of the great

[1] See Prosper. Tyro, p. 639. Sidonius (Panegyr. Avit. 246) complains, in the name of Auvergne, his native country,

Litorius Scythicos equites tunc forte subacto
Celsus Aremorico, Geticum rapiebat in agmen
Per terras, Arverne, tuas, qui proxima quæque
Discursu, flammis, ferro, feritate, rapinis,
Delebant; pacis fallentes nomen inane.

Another poet, Paulinus of Perigord, confirms the complaint:

Nam socium vix ferre queas, qui durior hoste.

See Dubos, tom. i, p. 330.

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Alaric ;[k] and his prosperous reign, of more than thirty years, over a turbulent people may be allowed to prove, that his prudence was supported by uncommon vigour, both of mind and body. Impatient of his narrow limits, Theodoric aspired to the possession of Arles, the wealthy seat of government and commerce; but the city was saved by the timely approach of Ætius; and the Gothic king, who had raised the siege with some loss and disgrace, was persuaded, for an adequate subsidy, to divert the martial valour of his subjects in a Spanish war. Yet Theodoric still watched, and eagerly seized, the favourable moment of renewing his hostile attempts. The Goths besieged Narbonne, while the Belgic provinces were invaded by the Burgundians; and the public safety was threatened on every side by the apparent union of the enemies of Rome. On every side, the activity of Ætius, and his Scythian cavalry, opposed a firm and successful resistance. Twenty thousand Burgundians were slain in battle; and the remains of the nation humbly accepted a dependent seat in the moun-

A. D. 435-439.

[k] Theodoric II, the son of Theodoric I, declares to Avitus his resolution of repairing, or expiating, the faults which his *grandfather* had committed.

Quæ *noster* peccavit *avus*, quem fuscat id unum,
Quod te, Roma, capit.———

Sidon. Panegyric. Avit. 505.

This character, applicable only to the great Alaric, establishes the genealogy of the Gothic kings, which has hitherto been unnoticed.

tains of Savoy.[1] The walls of Narbonne had been shaken by the battering engines, and the inhabitants had endured the last extremities of famine, when Count Litorius, approaching in silence, and directing each horseman to carry behind him two sacks of flour, cut his way through the intrenchments of the besiegers. The siege was immediately raised; and the more decisive victory, which is ascribed to the personal conduct of Ætius himself, was marked with the blood of eight thousand Goths. But in the absence of the patrician, who was hastily summoned to Italy by some public or private interest, Count Litorius succeeded to the command; and his presumption soon discovered, that far different talents are required to lead a wing of cavalry, or to direct the operations of an important war. At the head of an army of Huns, he rashly advanced to the gates of Thoulouse, full of careless contempt for an enemy, whom his misfortunes had rendered prudent, and his situation made desperate. The predictions of the augurs had inspired Litorius with the profane confidence, that he should enter the Gothic capital in triumph; and the trust which he reposed in his pagan allies, encouraged him to reject the fair conditions of peace, which were repeat- CHAP. XXXV.

[1] The name of *Sapaudia*, the origin of *Savoy*, is first mentioned by Ammianus Marcellinus; and two military posts are ascertained, by the Notitia, within the limits of that province; a cohort was stationed at Grenoble in Dauphiné; and Ebredunum, or Iverdun, sheltered a fleet of small vessels, which commanded the lake of Neufchâtel. See Valesius, Notit. Galliarum, p. 503. D'Anville, Notice de l'Ancienne Gaule, p. 284, 579.

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edly proposed by the bishops in the name of Theodoric. The king of the Goths exhibited in his distress the edifying contrast of christian piety and moderation; nor did he lay aside his sackcloth and ashes till he was prepared to arm for the combat. His soldiers, animated with martial and religious enthusiasm, assaulted the camp of Litorius. The conflict was obstinate, the slaughter was mutual. The Roman general, after a total defeat, which could be imputed only to his unskilful rashness, was actually led through the streets of Thoulouse, not in his own, but in a hostile triumph; and the misery which he experienced, in a long and ignominious captivity, excited the compassion of the barbarians themselves.[m] Such a loss, in a country whose spirit and finances were long since exhausted, could not easily be repaired; and the Goths, assuming, in their turn, the sentiments of ambition and revenge, would have planted their victorious standards on the banks of the Rhone, if the presence of Ætius had not restored strength and discipline to the Romans.[n] The two armies expected the

[m] Salvian has attempted to explain the moral government of the Deity; a task which may be readily performed by supposing, that the calamities of the wicked are, *judgments*, and those of the righteous, *trials*.

[n] ——— Capto terrarum damna patebant
Litorio, in Rhodânum proprios producere fines,
Theudoridæ fixum; nec erat pugnare necesse,
Sed migrare Getis; rabidam trux asperat iram
Victor; quod sensit Scythicum sub mœnibus hostem
Imputat, et nihil est gravius, si forsitan unquam
Vincere contingat, trepido. ———

Panegyr. Avit. 300, &c.

signal of a decisive action; but the generals, who were conscious of each other's force, and doubtful of their own superiority, prudently sheathed their swords in the field of battle; and their reconciliation was permanent and sincere. Theodoric, king of the Visigoths, appears to have deserved the love of his subjects, the confidence of his allies, and the esteem of mankind. His throne was surrounded by six valiant sons, who were educated with equal care in the exercises of the barbarian camp, and in those of the Gallic schools: from the study of the Roman jurisprudence, they acquired the theory, at least, of law and justice; and the harmonious sense of Virgil contributed to soften the asperity of their native manners.[o] The two daughters of the Gothic king were given in marriage to the eldest sons of the kings of the Suevi and of the Vandals, who reigned in Spain and Africa; but these illustrious alliances were pregnant with guilt and discord. The queen of the Suevi bewailed the death of an husband, inhumanly massacred by her brother. The princess of the Vandals was the victim of a jealous tyrant, whom she called her father. The cruel Genseric suspect- CHAP. XXXV.

Sidonius then proceeds, according to the duty of a panegyrist, to transfer the whole merit from Ætius, to his minister Avitus.

[o] Theodoric II. revered, in the person of Avitus, the character of his preceptor.

——— Mihi Romula dudum
Per te jura placent: parvumque ediscere jussit
Ad tua verba pater, docili quo prisca *Maronis*
Carmine molliret Scythicos mihi pagina mores.
Sidon. Panegyr. Avit. 495, &c.

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ed that his son's wife had conspired to poison him; the supposed crime was punished by the amputation of her nose and ears; and the unhappy daughter of Theodoric was ignominiously returned to the court of Thoulouse in that deformed and mutilated condition. This horrid act, which must seem incredible to a civilized age, drew tears from every spectator; but Theodoric was urged, by the feelings of a parent and a king, to revenge such irreparable injuries. The imperial ministers, who always cherished the discord of the barbarians, would have supplied the Goths with arms, and ships, and treasures, for the African war; and the cruelty of Genseric might have been fatal to himself, if the artful Vandal had not armed, in his cause, the formidable power of the Huns. His rich gifts and pressing solicitations inflamed the ambition of Attila; and the designs of Ætius and Theodoric were prevented by the invasion of Gaul.[p]

The Franks in Gaul, under the Merovingian kings.

The Franks, whose monarchy was still confined to the neighbourhood of the Lower Rhine, had wisely established the right of hereditary succession in the noble family of the Merovingians.[q]

[p] Our authorities for the reign of Theodoric I. are, Jornandes de Rebus Geticis, c. 34, 36, and the Chronicles of Idatius, and the two Prospers, inserted in the Historians of France, tom. i, p. 612-640. To these we may add Salvian de Gubernatione Dei, l. vii, p. 243, 244, 245, and the panegyric of Avitus, by Sidonius.

[q] Reges *Crinitos* se creavisse de primâ, et ut ita dicam nobiliori suorum familiâ (Greg. Turon. l. ii, c. 9, p. 166, of the second volume of the Historians of France). Gregory himself does not

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These princes were elevated on a buckler, the symbol of military command;[r] and the royal fashion of long hair was the ensign of their birth and dignity. Their flaxen locks, which they combed and dressed with singular care, hung down in flowing ringlets on their back and shoulders; while the rest of their nation were obliged, either by law or custom, to shave the hinder part of their head; to comb their hair over the forehead, and to content themselves with the ornament of two small whiskers.[s] The lofty stature of the Franks, and their blue eyes, denoted a Germanic origin; their close apparel accurately expressed the figure of their limbs; a weighty sword was suspended from a broad belt; their bodies were protected by a large shield: and these warlike barbarians were trained, from their

mention the *Merovingian* name, which may be traced, however, to the beginning of the seventh century, as the distinctive appellation of the royal family, and even of the French monarchy. An ingenious critic has deduced the Merovingians from the great Maroboduus; and he has clearly proved, that the prince, who gave his name to the first race, was more ancient than the father of Childeric. See the Memoires de l'Academie des Inscriptions, tom. xx, p. 52-90; tom. xxx, p. 557-587.

[r] This German custom, which may be traced from Tacitus to Gregory of Tours, was at length adopted by the emperors of Constantinople. From a MS. of the tenth century, Montfaucon has delineated the representation of a similar ceremony, which the ignorance of the age has applied to king David. See Monuments de la Monarchie Françoise, tom. i, Discourse Preliminaire.

[s] Cæsaries prolixa . . . . crinium flagellis per terga dimissis, &c. See the preface to the third volume of the Historians of France, and the Abbé Le Bœuf (Dissertat. tom. iii, p. 47-79). This peculiar fashion of the Merovingians has been remarked by natives and strangers; by Priscus (tom. i, p. 608); by Agathias (tom. ii, p. 49), and by Gregory of Tours, l. iii, 18; vi, 24; viii, 10; tom. ii, p. 196, 278, 816.

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earliest youth, to run, to leap, to swim; to dart the javelin, or battle-axe, with unerring aim; to advance, without hesitation, against a superior enemy; and to maintain, either in life or death, the invincible reputation of their ancestors.[t] Clodion, the first of their long-haired kings, whose name and actions are mentioned in authentic history, held his residence at Dispargum,[u] a village or fortress, whose place may be assigned between Louvain and Brussels. From the report of his spies, the king of the Franks was informed that the defenceless state of the second Belgic must yield, on the slightest attack, to the valour of his subjects. He boldly penetrated through the thickets and morasses of the Carbonarian forest,[x] occupied Tourney and Cambray, the only cities which existed in the fifth century, and extended his conquests as far as the river Somme, over a desolate country, whose cultivation and populousness are the effects of more recent industry.[y] While Clodion lay encamped in the

[t] See an original picture of the figure, dress, arms, and temper of the ancient Franks in Sidonius Apollinaris (Panegyr. Majorian. 238-254); and such pictures, though coarsely drawn, have a real and intrinsic value. Father Daniel (Hist. de la Milice Françoise, tom. i, p. 2-7) has illustrated the description.

[u] Dubos, Hist. Critique, &c. tom. i, p. 271, 272. Some geographers have placed Dispargum on the German side of the Rhine. See a note of the Benedictine Editors to the Historians of France, tom. ii, p. 166.

[x] The Carbonarian wood was that part of the great forest of the Ardennes, which lay between the Escaut, or Scheld, and the Meuse. Vales. Notit. Gall. p. 126.

[y] Gregor. Turon. l. ii, c. 9, in tom. ii, p. 166, 167. Fredegar. Epitom. c. 9, p. 395. Gesta Reg. Francor. c. 5, in tom. ii, p. 544. Vit. St Remig. ad Hincmar, in tom. iii, p. 373.

plains of Artois,[z] and celebrated, with vain and ostentatious security, the marriage, perhaps, of his son, the nuptial feast was interrupted by the unexpected and unwelcome presence of Ætius, who had passed the Somme at the head of his light cavalry. The tables which had been spread under the shelter of a hill, along the banks of a pleasant stream, were rudely overturned; the Franks were oppressed before they could recover their arms, or their ranks; and their unavailing valour was fatal only to themselves. The loaded waggons, which had followed their march, afforded a rich booty; and the virgin bride, with her female attendants, submitted to the new lovers, who were imposed on them by the chance of war. This advantage, which had been obtained by the skill and activity of Ætius, might reflect some disgrace on the military prudence of Clodion; but the king of the Franks soon regained his strength and reputation, and still maintained the possession of his Gallic kingdom from the Rhine to the Somme.[a] Under his

——— Francus quâ Cloio patentes
Atrebatum terras pervaserat.———

Panegyr. Majorian. 212

[z] The precise spot was a town, or village, called Vicus *Helena*; and both the name and the place are discovered by modern geographers at Lens. See Vales. Notit. Gall. p. 246. Longuerue, Description de la France, tom. ii, p. 88.

[a] See a vague account of the action in Sidonius, Panegyr. Majorian. 212–230. The French critics, impatient to establish their monarchy in Gaul, have drawn a strong argument from the silence of Sidonius, who dares not insinuate, that the vanquished Franks were compelled to repass the Rhine. Dubos, tom. i, p. 322.

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reign, and most probably from the enterprising spirit of his subjects, the three capitals, Mentz, Treves, and Cologne, experienced the effects of hostile cruelty and avarice. The distress of Cologne was prolonged by the perpetual dominion of the same barbarians, who evacuated the ruins of Treves; and Treves, which, in the space of forty years, had been four times besieged and pillaged, was disposed to lose the memory of her afflictions in the vain amusements of the Circus.[b] The death of Clodion, after a reign of twenty years, exposed his kingdom to the discord and ambition of his two sons. Meroveus, the younger,[c] was persuaded to implore the protection of Rome; he was received at the imperial court as the ally of Valentinian, and the adopted son of the patrician Ætius; and dismissed, to his native country, with splendid gifts, and the strongest assurances of friendship and support. During his absence, his elder brother had solicited, with equal ardour, the formidable aid of Attila; and the king of the Huns embraced an alliance, which

[b] Salvian (de Gubernat. Dei, l. vi) has expressed, in vague and declamatory language, the misfortunes of these three cities, which are distinctly ascertained by the learned Mascou, Hist. of the Ancient Germans, ix, 21.

[c] Priscus, in relating the contest, does not name the two brothers; the second of whom he had seen at Rome, a beardless youth, with long flowing hair (Historians of France, tom. i, p. 607, 608). The Benedictine Editors are inclined to believe, that they were the sons of some unknown king of the Franks, who reigned on the banks of the Necker: but the arguments of M. de Foncemagne (Mem. de l'Academie, tom. viii, p. 464) seem to prove, that the succession of Clodion was disputed by his two sons, and that the younger was Merovcus, the father of Childeric.

facilitated the passage of the Rhine, and justified, by a specious and honourable pretence, the invasion of Gaul.[d] CHAP. XXXV.

The adventures of the princess Honoria.

When Attila declared his resolution of supporting the cause of his allies, the Vandals and the Franks, at the same time, and almost in the spirit of romantic chivalry, the savage monarch professed himself the lover and the champion of the princess Honoria. The sister of Valentinian was educated in the palace of Ravenna; and as her marriage might be productive of some danger to the state, she was raised, by the title of *Augusta*,[e] above the hopes of the most presumptuous subject. But the fair Honoria had no sooner attained the sixteenth year of her age, than she detested the importunate greatness which must for ever exclude her from the comforts of honourable love: in the midst of vain and unsatisfactory pomp, Honoria sighed, yielded to the impulse of nature, and threw herself into the arms of her chamberlain Eugenius. Her guilt and shame (such is the absurd language of imperious man) were soon betrayed by the appearances of pregnancy: but the disgrace of the royal family was published to the world by the

[d] Under the Merovingian race, the throne was hereditary; but all the sons of the deceased monarch were equally entitled to their share of his treasures and territories. See the dissertation of M. de Foncemagne, in the sixth and eighth volumes of the Memoires de l'Academie.

[e] A medal is still extant which exhibits the pleasing countenance of Honoria, with the title of Augusta; and on the reverse, the improper legend of *Salus Reipublicæ* round the monagram of Christ. See Ducange, Famil. Byzantin. p. 67, 73.

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imprudence of the empress Placidia; who dismissed her daughter, after a strict and shameful confinement, to a remote exile at Constantinople. The unhappy princess passed twelve or fourteen years in the irksome society of the sisters of Theodosius, and their chosen virgins; to whose *crown* Honoria could no longer aspire, and whose monastic assiduity of prayer, fasting, and vigils, she reluctantly imitated. Her impatience of long and hopeless celibacy, urged her to embrace a strange and desperate resolution. The name of Attila was familiar and formidable at Constantinople; and his frequent embassies entertained a perpetual intercourse between his camp and the imperial palace. In the pursuit of love, or rather of revenge, the daughter of Placidia sacrificed every duty and every prejudice; and offered to deliver her person into the arms of a barbarian, of whose language she was ignorant, whose figure was scarcely human, and whose religion and manners she abhorred. By the ministry of a faithful eunuch, she transmitted to Attila a ring, the pledge of her affection; and earnestly conjured him to claim her as a lawful spouse, to whom he had been secretly betrothed. These indecent advances were received, however, with coldness and disdain; and the king of the Huns continued to multiply the number of his wives, till his love was awakened by the more forcible passions of ambition and avarice. The invasion of Gaul was preceded, and justified, by a formal demand of the princess Hono-

ria, with a just and equal share of the imperial patrimony. His predecessors, the ancient Tanjous, had often addressed, in the same hostile and peremptory manner, the daughters of China; and the pretensions of Attila were not less offensive to the majesty of Rome. A firm, but temperate, refusal was communicated to his ambassadors. The right of female succession, though it might derive a specious argument from the recent examples of Placidia and Pulcheria, was strenuously denied; and the indissoluble engagements of Honoria were opposed to the claims of her Scythian lover.[f] On the discovery of her connexion with the king of the Huns, the guilty princess had been sent away, as an object of horror, from Constantinople to Italy; her life was spared; but the ceremony of her marriage was performed with some obscure and nominal husband, before she was immured in a perpetual prison, to bewail those crimes and misfortunes, which Honoria might have escaped, had she not been born the daughter of an emperor.[g]

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A native of Gaul, and a contemporary, the learned and eloquent Sidonius, who was after-

Attila invades Gaul, and besieges Orleans,

[f] See Priscus, p. 39, 40. It might be fairly alleged, that if females could succeed to the throne, Valentinian himself, who had married the daughter and heiress of the younger Theodosius, would have asserted her right to the eastern empire.

[g] The adventures of Honoria are imperfectly related by Jornandes, de Successione Regn. c. 97, and de Reb. Get. c. 42, p. 674; and in the Chronicles of Prosper and Marcellinus; but they cannot be made consistent, or probable, unless we separate, by an interval of time and place, her intrigue with Eugenius, and her invitation of Attila.

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wards bishop of Clermont, had made a promise to one of his friends, that he would compose a regular history of the war of Attila. If the modesty of Sidonius had not discouraged him from the prosecution of this interesting work,[h] the historian would have related, with the simplicity of truth, those memorable events, to which the poet, in vague and doubtful metaphors, has concisely alluded.[i] The kings and nations of Germany and Scythia, from the Volga perhaps to the Danube, obeyed the warlike summons of Attila. From the royal village, in the plains of Hungary, his standard moved towards the West; and, after a march of seven or eight hundred miles, he reached the conflux of the Rhine and the Necker; where he was joined by the Franks, who adhered to his ally, the elder of the sons of Clodion. A troop of light barbarians, who roamed in quest of plunder, might choose the winter for the convenience of passing the river

[h] Exegeras mihi, ut promitterem tibi, Attilæ bellum stylo me posteris intimaturum . . . . . cœperam scribere, sed operis arepti fasce perspecto, tæduit inchoasse. Sidon. Apoll. l. viii, epist. 15, p. 246.

[i] ——— Subito cum rupta tumultu
Barbaries totas in te transfuderat Arctos,
Gallia. Pugnacem Regum comitante Gelono
Gepida trux sequitur; Scyrum Burgundio cogit:
Chunus, Bellonotus, Neurus, Basterna, *Toringus*
Bructerus, ulvosâ vel quem Nicer abluit unda
Prorumpit Francus. Cecidit cito secta bipenni
Hercynia in lintres, et Rhenum texuit alno.
Et jam terrificis diffuderat Attila turmis
In campos se Belga tuos.———

Panegyr. Avit. 319, &c.

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on the ice; but the innumerable cavalry of the Huns required such plenty of forage and provisions, as could be procured only in a milder season; the Hercynian forest supplied materials for a bridge of boats; and the hostile myriads were poured, with resistless violence, into the Belgic provinces.[k] The consternation of Gaul was universal; and the various fortunes of its cities have been adorned by tradition with martyrdoms and miracles.[l] Troyes was saved by the merits of St Lupus; St Servatius was removed from the world, that he might not behold the ruin of Tongres; and the prayers of St Genevieve diverted the march of Attila from the neighbourhood of Paris. But as the greater part of the Gallic cities were alike destitute of saints and soldiers, they were besieged and stormed by the Huns; who practised, in the example of

[k] The most authentic and circumstantial account of this war, is contained in Jornandes (de Reb. Geticis, c. 36-41, p. 662-672), who has sometimes abridged, and sometimes transcribed, the larger history of Cassiodorius. Jornandes, a quotation which it would be superfluous to repeat, may be corrected and illustrated by Gregory of Tours, l. 2, c. 5, 6, 7, and the Chronicles of Idatius, Isidore, and the two Prospers. All the ancient testimonies are collected and inserted in the Historians of France; but the reader should be cautioned against a supposed extract from the Chronicle of Idatius (among the fragments of Fredegarius, tom. ii, p. 462), which often contradicts the genuine text of the Gallician bishop.

[l] The *ancient* legendaries deserve some regard, as they are obliged to connect their fables with the real history of their own times. See the lives of St Lupus, St Anianus, the bishop of Metz, Ste. Genevieve, &c. in the Historians of France, tom. i, p. 614, 645, 649; tom. iii, p. 369.

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Metz,[m] their customary maxims of war. They involved in a promiscuous massacre, the priests who served at the altar, and the infants, who, in the hour of danger, had been providently baptized by the bishop; the flourishing city was delivered to the flames, and a solitary chapel of St Stephen marked the place where it formerly stood. From the Rhine and the Moselle, Attila advanced into the heart of Gaul; crossed the Siene at Auxerre; and, after a long and laborious march, fixed his camp under the walls of Orleans. He was desirous of securing his conquests by the possession of an advantageous post, which commanded the passage of the Loire; and he depended on the secret invitation of Sangiban, king of the Alani, who had promised to betray the city, and to revolt from the service of the empire. But this treacherous conspiracy was detected and disappointed: Orleans had been strengthened with recent fortifications; and the assaults of the Huns were vigorously repelled by the faithful valour of the soldiers, or citizens, who defended the place. The pastoral diligence of

[m] The scepticism of the Count de Buat (Hist. des Peuples, tom. vii, p. 539, 540) cannot be reconciled with any principles of reason or criticism. Is not Gregory of Tours precise and positive in his account of the destruction of Metz? At the distance of no more than an hundred years, could he be ignorant, could the people be ignorant, of the fate of a city, the actual residence of his sovereigns, the kings of Austrasia? The learned count, who seems to have undertaken the apology of Attila, and the barbarians, appeals to the false Idatius, *parcens* civitatibus Germaniæ et Galliæ, and forgets, that the true Idatius had explicitly affirmed, plurimæ civitates *effractæ*, among which he enumerates Metz.

Anianus, a bishop of primitive sanctity and consummate prudence, exhausted every art of religious policy to support their courage, till the arrival of the expected succours. After an obstinate siege, the walls were shaken by the battering rams; the Huns had already occupied the suburbs; and the people, who were incapable of bearing arms, lay prostrate in prayer. Anianus, who anxiously counted the days and hours, dispatched a trusty messenger to observe, from the rampart, the face of the distant country. He returned twice, without any intelligence, that could inspire hope or comfort; but, in his third report, he mentioned a small cloud, which he had faintly descried at the extremity of the horizon. "It is the aid of God!" exclaimed the bishop, in a tone of pious confidence; and the whole multitude repeated after him—"It is the aid of God." The remote object, on which every eye was fixed, became each moment larger, and more distinct; the Roman and Gothic banners were gradually perceived; and a favourable wind blowing aside the dust, discovered, in deep array, the impatient squadrons of Ætius and Theodoric, who pressed forwards to the relief of Orleans. CHAP. XXXV.

Alliance of the Romans and Visigoths.

The facility with which Attila had penetrated into the heart of Gaul, may be ascribed to his insidious policy, as well as to the terror of his arms. His public declarations were skilfully mitigated by his private assurances; he alternately soothed and threatened the Romans and the Goths; and the courts of Ravenna and Thoulouse, mutually suspicious of each other's inten-

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tions, beheld, with supine indifference, the approach of their common enemy. Ætius was the sole guardian of the public safety; but his wisest measures were embarrassed by a faction, which, since the death of Placidia, infested the imperial palace: the youth of Italy trembled at the sound of the trumpet; and the barbarians, who, from fear or affection, were inclined to the cause of Attila, awaited, with doubtful and venal faith, the event of the war. The patrician passed the Alps at the head of some troops, whose strength and numbers scarcely deserved the name of an army.[n] But on his arrival at Arles, or Lyons, he was confounded by the intelligence, that the Visigoths, refusing to embrace the defence of Gaul, had determined to expect, within their own territories, the formidable invader, whom they professed to despise. The senator Avitus, who, after the honourable exercise of the prætorian prefecture, had retired to his estate in Auvergne, was persuaded to accept the important embassy, which he executed with ability and success. He represented to Theodoric, that an ambitious conqueror, who aspired to the dominion of the earth, could be resisted only by the firm and unanimous alliance of the powers whom he laboured to oppress. The lively eloquence of Avitus inflamed the Gothic warriors, by the description of

[n] ——— Vix liquerat Alpes
Ætius, tenue, et rarum sine milite ducens
Robur, in auxiliis Geticum male credulus agmen
Incassum propriis præsumens adfore castris.
Panegyr. Avit. 323, &c.

the injuries which their ancestors had suffered from the Huns; whose implacable fury still pursued them from the Danube to the foot of the Pyrenees. He strenuously urged, that it was the duty of every Christian to save, from sacrilegious violation, the churches of God, and the relics of the saints: that it was the interest of every barbarian, who had acquired a settlement in Gaul, to defend the fields and vineyards, which were cultivated for his use, against the desolation of the Scythian shepherds. Theodoric yielded to the evidence of truth; adopted the measure at once the most prudent and the most honourable; and declared, that as the faithful ally of Ætius and the Romans, he was ready to expose his life and kingdom for the common safety of Gaul.* The Visigoths, who, at that time, were in the mature vigour of their fame and power, obeyed with alacrity the signal of war; prepared their arms and horses, and assembled under the standard of their aged king, who was resolved, with his two eldest sons, Torismond and Theodoric, to command in person his numerous and valiant people. The example of the Goths determined several tribes or nations, that seemed to fluctuate between the Huns and the Romans. The indefatigable diligence of the patrician

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* The policy of Attila, of Ætius, and of the Visigoths, is imperfectly described in the Panegyric of Avitus, and the thirty-sixth chapter of Jornandes. The poet and the historian were both biassed by personal or national prejudices. The former exalts the merit and importance of Avitus; orbis, Avite, salus, &c.! The latter is anxious to show the Goths in the most favourable light. Yet their agreement, when they are fairly interpreted, is a proof of their veracity.

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gradually collected the troops of Gaul and Germany, who had formerly acknowledged themselves the subjects, or soldiers, of the republic, but who now claimed the rewards of voluntary service, and the rank of independent allies; the Læti, the Armoricans, the Breones, the Saxons, the Burgundians, the Sarmatians, or Alani, the Ripuarians, and the Franks who followed Meroveus as their lawful prince. Such was the various army, which, under the conduct of Ætius, and Theodoric, advanced, by rapid marches, to relieve Orleans, and to give battle to the innumerable host of Attila.[p]

Attila retires to the plains of Champagne.

On their approach, the king of the Huns immediately raised the siege, and sounded a retreat to recal the foremost of his troops from the pillage of a city which they had already entered.[q] The valour of Attila was always guided by his prudence; and as he foresaw the fatal consequences of a defeat in the heart of Gaul, he repassed the Seine, and expected the enemy in the plains of Châlons, whose smooth and level

[p] The review of the army of Ætius is made by Jornandes, c. 36, p. 664, edit. Grot. tom. ii, p. 23, of the Historians of France, with the notes of the Benedictine editor. The *Læti* were a promiscuous race of barbarians, born or naturalized in Gaul; and the Riparii, or *Ripuarii*, derived their name from their posts on the three rivers, the Rhine, the Meuse, and the Moselle; the *Armoricans* possessed the independent cities between the Seine and the Loire. A colony of *Saxons* had been planted in the diocese of Bayeux; the *Burgundians* were settled in Savoy; and the *Breones* were a warlike tribe of Rhætians, to the east of the lake of Constance.

[q] Aurelianensis urbis obsidio, oppugnatio, irruptio, nec direptio, l. v. Sidon. Apollin. l. viii, epist. 15, p. 246. The preservation of Orleans might be easily turned into a miracle, obtained, and foretold, by the holy bishop.

surface was adapted to the operations of his Scythian cavalry. But in this tumultuary retreat, the vanguard of the Romans, and their allies, continually pressed, and sometimes engaged, the troops whom Attila had posted in the rear; the hostile columns, in the darkness of the night, and the perplexity of the roads, might encounter each other without design; and the bloody conflict of the Franks and Gepidæ, in which fifteen thousand[r] barbarians were slain, was a prelude to a more general and decisive action. The Catalaunian fields[s] spread themselves round Châlons, and extend, according to the vague measurement of Jornandes, to the length of one hundred and fifty, and the breadth of one hundred, miles, over the whole province, which is entitled to the appellation of a *champaign* country.[t] This spacious plain was distinguished, however, by some inequalities of ground; and the importance of an height, which commanded the camp of Attila, was understood, and disputed, by the two generals. The young and valiant Torismond first occupied the summit; the Goths rushed with irresistible weight on the Huns, who

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[r] The common editions read XCM; but there is some authority of manuscripts (and almost any authority is sufficient) for the more reasonable number of XVM.

[s] Châlons, or Duro-Catalaunum, afterwards *Catalauni*, had formerly made a part of the territory of Rheims, from whence it is distant only twenty-seven miles. See Vales. Notit. Gall. p. 136. D'Anville, Notice de l'Ancienne Gaule, p. 212, 279.

[t] The name of Campania, or Campagne, is frequently mentioned by Gregory of Tours; and that great province, of which Rheims was the capital, obeyed the command of a duke. Vales. Notit. p. 120-123.

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laboured to ascend from the opposite side; and the possession of this advantageous post inspired both the troops and their leaders with a fair assurance of victory. The anxiety of Attila prompted him to consult his priests and haruspices. It was reported, that after scrutinizing the entrails of victims, and scraping their bones, they revealed, in mysterious language, his own defeat, with the death of his principal adversary; and that the barbarian, by accepting the equivalent, expressed his involuntary esteem for the superior merit of Ætius. But the unusual despondency, which seemed to prevail among the Huns, engaged Attila to use the expedient, so familiar to the generals of antiquity, of animating his troops by a military oration; and his language was that of a king, who had often fought and conquered at their head.[u] He pressed them to consider their past glory, their actual danger, and their future hopes. The same fortune, which opened the deserts and morasses of Scythia to their unarmed valour, which had laid so many warlike nations prostrate at their feet, had reserved the *joys* of this memorable field for the consummation of their victories. The cautious steps of their enemies, their strict alliance, and their advantageous posts, he artfully represented as the effects, not of prudence, but of fear. The Visi-

[u] I am sensible that these military orations are usually composed by the historian; yet the old Ostrogoths, who had served under Attila, might repeat his discourse to Cassiodorius: the ideas, and even the expressions, have an original Scythian cast; and I doubt, whether an Italian of the sixth century would have thought of the hujus certaminis *gaudia*.

goths alone were the strength and nerves of the opposite army; and the Huns might securely trample on the degenerate Romans, whose close and compact order betrayed their apprehensions, and who were equally incapable of supporting the dangers, or the fatigues, of a day of battle. The doctrine of predestination, so favourable to martial virtue, was carefully inculcated by the king of the Huns; who assured his subjects, that the warriors, protected by Heaven, were safe and invulnerable amidst the darts of the enemy; but that the unerring Fates would strike their victims in the bosom of inglorious peace. "I "myself," continued Attila, "will throw the "first javelin, and the wretch who refuses to "imitate the example of his sovereign, is devo- "ted to inevitable death." The spirit of the barbarians was rekindled by the presence, the voice, and the example, of their intrepid leader; and Attila, yielding to their impatience, immediately formed his order of battle. At the head of his brave and faithful Huns, he occupied in person the centre of the line. The nations subject to his empire, the Rugians, the Heruli, the Thuringians, the Franks, the Burgundians, were extended, on either hand, over the ample space of the Catalaunian fields; the right wing was commanded by Ardaric, king of the Gepidæ; and the three valiant brothers, who reigned over the Ostrogoths, were posted on the left, to oppose the kindred tribes of the Visigoths. The disposition of the allies was regulated by a different principle. Sangiban, the faithless king of the

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Alani, was placed in the centre; where his motions might be strictly watched, and his treachery might be instantly punished. Ætius assumed the command of the left, and Theodoric of the right, wing; while Torismond still continued to occupy the heights, which appear to have stretched on the flank, and perhaps the rear, of the Scythian army. The nations from the Volga to the Atlantic were assembled on the plain of Châlons; but many of these nations had been divided by faction, or conquest, or emigration; and the appearance of similar arms and ensigns, which threatened each other, presented the image of a civil war.

Battle of Châlons.

The discipline and tactics of the Greeks and Romans form an interesting part of their national manners. The attentive study of the military operations of Xenophon, or Cæsar, or Frederic, when they are described by the same genius which conceived and executed them, may tend to improve (if such improvement can be wished) the art of destroying the human species. But the battle of Châlons can only excite our curiosity by the magnitude of the object; since it was decided by the blind impetuosity of barbarians, and has been related by partial writers, whose civil or ecclesiastical profession secluded them from the knowledge of military affairs. Cassiodorius, however, had familiarly conversed with many Gothic warriors, who served in that memorable engagement; "a conflict," as they informed him, fierce "various, obstinate, and bloody; such as could "not be paralleled, either in the present, or in

"past ages." The number of the slain amounted to one hundred and sixty-two thousand, or, according to another account, three hundred thousand persons;[x] and these incredible exaggerations suppose a real and effective loss, sufficient to justify the historian's remark, that whole generations may be swept away, by the madness of kings, in the space of a single hour. After the mutual and repeated discharge of missile weapons, in which the archers of Scythia might signalize their superior dexterity, the cavalry and infantry of the two armies were furiously mingled in closer combat. The Huns, who fought under the eyes of their king, pierced through the feeble and doubtful centre of the allies, separated their wings from each other, and wheeling, with a rapid effort, to the left, directed their whole force against the Visigoths. As Theodoric rode along the ranks, to animate his troops, he received a mortal stroke from the javelin of Andages, a noble Ostrogoth, and immediately fell from his horse. The wounded king was oppressed in the general disorder, and trampled under the feet of his own cavalry; and this important death served to explain the ambiguous prophecy of the haruspices. Attila already ex-

[x] The expresions of Jornandes, or rather of Cassiodorius, are extremely strong. Bellum atrox, multiplex, immane, pertinax, cui simili nulla usquam narrat antiquitas; ubi talia gesta referuntur, ut nihil esset quod in vita suâ conspicere potuisset egregius, qui hujus miraculi privaretur aspectû. Dubos (Hist. Critique, tom. i, p. 392, 393) attempts to reconcile the 162,000 of Jornandes with the 300,000 of Idatius and Isidore, by supposing, that the larger number included the total destruction of the war, the effects of disease, the slaughter of the unarmed people, &c

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ulted in the confidence of victory, when the valiant Torismond descended from the hills, and verified the remainder of the prediction. The Visigoths, who had been thrown into confusion by the flight, or defection, of the Alani, gradually restored their order of battle; and the Huns were undoubtedly vanquished, since Attila was compelled to retreat. He had exposed his person with the rashness of a private soldier; but the intrepid troops of the centre had pushed forwards beyond the rest of the line; their attack was faintly supported; their flanks were unguarded; and the conquerors of Scythia and Germany were saved by the approach of the night from a total defeat. They retired within the circle of waggons that fortified their camp; and the dismounted squadrons prepared themselves for a defence, to which neither their arms, nor their temper, were adapted. The event was doubtful: but Attila had secured a last and honourable resource. The saddles and rich furniture of the cavalry were collected by his order, into a funeral pile; and the magnanimous barbarian had resolved, if his intrenchments should be forced, to rush headlong into the flames, and to deprive his enemies of the glory which they might have acquired, by the death or captivity of Attila.[y]

[y] The Count de Buat (Hist. des Peuples, &c. tom. vii, p. 554-573), still depending on the *false*, and again rejecting the *true*, Idatius, has divided the defeat of Attila into two great battles; the former near Orleans, the latter in Champagne; in the one Theodoric was slain; in the other he was revenged.

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Retreat of Attila.

But his enemies had passed the night in equal disorder and anxiety. The inconsiderate courage of Torismond was tempted to urge the pursuit, till he unexpectedly found himself, with a few followers, in the midst of the Scythian waggons. In the confusion of a nocturnal combat, he was thrown from his horse; and the Gothic prince must have perished like his father, if his youthful strength, and the intrepid zeal of his companions, had not rescued him from this dangerous situation. In the same manner, but on the left of the line, Ætius himself, separated from his allies, ignorant of their victory, and anxious for their fate, encountered and escaped the hostile troops, that were scattered over the plains of Châlons; and at length reached the camp of the Goths, which he could only fortify with a slight rampart of shields, till the dawn of day. The imperial general was soon satisfied of the defeat of Attila, who still remained inactive within his intrenchments; and when he contemplated the bloody scene, he observed, with secret satisfaction, that the loss had principally fallen on the barbarians. The body of Theodoric, pierced with honourable wounds, was discovered under a heap of the slain: his subjects bewailed the death of their king and father; but their tears were mingled with songs and acclamations, and his funeral rites were performed in the face of a vanquished enemy. The Goths, clashing their arms, elevated on a buckler his eldest son Torismond, to whom they justly ascribed the glory of their success; and the new king accepted the obliga-

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tion of revenge, as a sacred portion of his paternal inheritance. Yet the Goths themselves were astonished by the fierce and undaunted aspect of their formidable antagonist; and their historian has compared Attila to a lion encompassed in his den, and threatening his hunters with redoubled fury. The kings and nations, who might have deserted his standard in the hour of distress, were made sensible, that the displeasure of their monarch was the most imminent and inevitable danger. All his instruments of martial music incessantly sounded a loud and animating strain of defiance; and the foremost troops who advanced to the assault, were checked, or destroyed, by showers of arrows from every side of the intrenchments. It was determined, in a general council of war, to besiege the king of the Huns in his camp, to intercept his provisions, and to reduce him to the alternative of a disgraceful treaty, or an unequal combat. But the impatience of the barbarians soon disdained these cautious and dilatory measures; and the mature policy of Ætius was apprehensive, that, after the extirpation of the Huns, the republic would be oppressed by the pride and power of the Gothic nation. The patrician exerted the superior ascendant of authority and reason, to calm the passions, which the son of Theodoric considered as a duty; represented, with seeming affection, and real truth, the dangers of absence and delay; and persuaded Torismond to disappoint, by his speedy return, the ambitious designs of his brothers, who might occupy the throne and treasures of Thou-

louse.[z] After the departure of the Goths, and the separation of the allied army, Attila was surprised at the vast silence that reigned over the plains of Châlons: the suspicion of some hostile stratagem detained him several days within the circle of his waggons; and his retreat beyond the Rhine confessed the last victory which was achieved in the name of the western empire. Meroveus and his Franks observing a prudent distance, and magnifying the opinion of their strength, by the numerous fires which they kindled every night, continued to follow the rear of the Huns, till they reached the confines of Thuringia. The Thuringians served in the army of Attila: they traversed, both in their march, and in their return, the territories of the Franks; and it was perhaps in this war that they exercised the cruelties, which, about fourscore years afterwards, were revenged by the son of Clovis. They massacred their hostages, as well as their captives: two hundred young maidens were tortured with exquisite and unrelenting rage; their bodies were torn asunder by wild horses, or their bones were crushed under the weight of rolling waggons; and their unburied limbs were abandoned on the public roads, as a prey to dogs and

[z] Jornandes de Rebus Geticis, c. 41, p. 671. The policy of Ætius, and the behaviour of Torismond, are extremely natural; and the patrician, according to Gregory of Tours (l. ii, c. 7, p. 168), dismissed the prince of the Franks, by suggesting to him a similar apprehension. The false Idatius ridiculously pretends, that Ætius paid a clandestine, nocturnal, visit to the kings of the Huns and of the Visigoths; from each of whom he obtained a bribe of ten thousand pieces of gold, as the price of an undisturbed retreat.

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vultures. Such were those savage ancestors, whose imaginary virtues have sometimes excited the praise and envy of civilized ages![a]

Invasion of Italy by Attila, A. D. 452.

Neither the spirit, nor the forces, nor the reputation of Attila, were impaired by the failure of the Gallic expedition. In the ensuing spring, he repeated his demand, of the princess Honoria, and her patrimonial treasures. The demand was again rejected, or eluded: and the indignant lover immediately took the field, passed the Alps, invaded Italy, and besieged Aquileia with an innumerable host of barbarians. Those barbarians were unskilled in the methods of conducting a regular siege, which, even among the ancients, required some knowledge, or at least some practice, of the mechanic arts. But the labour of many thousand provincials and captives, whose lives were sacrificed without pity, might execute the most painful and dangerous work. The skill of the Roman artists might be corrupted to the destruction of their country. The walls of Aquileia were assaulted by a formidable train of battering-rams, moveable turrets, and engines, that threw stones, darts, and fire:[b] and the monarch of the Huns employed

[a] These cruelties, which are passionately deplored by Theodoric, the son of Clovis (Gregory of Tours, l. iii, c. 10, p. 190), suit the time and circumstances of the invasion of Attila. His residence in Thuringia was long attested by popular tradition; and he is supposed to have assembled a *conroultai*, or diet, in the territory of Eisenach. See Mascou, ix, 30, who settles with nice accuracy the extent of ancient Thuringia, and derives its name from the Gothic tribe of the Thervingi.

[b] Machinis constructis, omnibusque tormentorum generibus adhi-

the forcible impulse of hope, fear, emulation, and interest, to subvert the only barrier which delayed the conquest of Italy. Aquileia was at that period one of the richest, the most populous, and the strongest of the maritime cities of the Hadriatic coast. The Gothic auxiliaries, who appear to have served under their native princes Alaric and Antala, communicated their intrepid spirit; and the citizens still remembered the glorious and successful resistance, which their ancestors had opposed to a fierce, inexorable barbarian, who disgraced the majesty of the Roman purple. Three months were consumed without effect in the siege of Aquileia; till the want of provisions, and the clamours of his army, compelled Attila to relinquish the enterprise; and reluctantly to issue his orders, that the troops should strike their tents the next morning, and begin their retreat. But as he rode round the walls, pensive, angry, and disappointed, he observed a stork, preparing to leave her nest, in one of the towers, and to fly with her infant family towards the country. He seized, with the ready penetration of a statesman, this trifling incident, which chance had offered to superstibitis. Jornandes, c. 42, p. 673. In the thirteenth century, the Moguls battered the cities of China with large engines constructed by the Mahometans or Christians in their service, which threw stones from 150 to 300 pounds weight. In the defence of their country, the Chinese used gunpowder, and even bombs, above an hundred years before they were known in Europe; yet even those celestial, or infernal, arms were insufficient to protect a pusillanimous nation. See Gaubil. Hist. des Mongous, p. 70, 71, 155, 157, &c.

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tion, and exclaimed, in a loud and cheerful tone, that such a domestic bird, so constantly attached to human society, would never have abandoned her ancient seats, unless those towers had been devoted to impending ruin and solitude.[c] The favourable omen inspired an assurance of victory; the siege was renewed, and prosecuted with fresh vigour; a large breach was made in the part of the wall from whence the stork had taken her flight; the Huns mounted to the assault with irresistible fury; and the succeeding generation could scarcely discover the ruins of Aquileia.[d] After this dreadful chastisement, Attila pursued his march; and as he passed, the cities of Altinum, Concordia, and Padua, were reduced into heaps of stones and ashes. The inland towns, Vicenza, Verona, and Bergamo, were exposed to the rapacious cruelty of the Huns. Milan and Pavia submitted, without resistance, to the loss of their wealth; and applauded the unusual clemency, which preserved from the flames the public, as well as private, buildings; and spared the lives of the captive multitude. The popular traditions of Comum, Turin, or Modena, may justly be suspected; yet

[c] The same story is told by Jornandes, and by Procopius (de Bell. Vandal. l. i, c. 4, p. 187, 188): nor is it easy to decide which is the original. But the Greek historian is guilty of an inexcusable mistake, in placing the siege of Aquileia *after* the death of Ætius.

[d] Jornandes, about an hundred years afterwards, affirms, that Aquileia was so completely ruined, ita ut vix ejus vestigia, ût appareant, reliquerint. See Jornandes de Reb. Geticis, c. 42, p. 673. Paul. Diacon. l. ii, c. 14, p. 785. Liutprand. Hist. l. iii, c. 2. The name of Aquileia was sometimes applied to Forum Julii (Cividad dell Friuli), the more recent capital of the Venetian province.

they concur with more authentic evidence to prove, that Attila spread his ravages over the rich plains of modern Lombardy; which are divided by the Po, and bounded by the Alps and Appenine.[e] When he took possession of the royal palace of Milan, he was surprised, and offended, at the sight of a picture which represented the Cæsars seated on their throne, and the princes of Scythia prostrate at their feet. The revenge which Attila inflicted on this monument of Roman vanity, was harmless and ingenious. He commanded a painter to reverse the figures, and the attitudes; and the emperors were delineated on the same canvass, approaching in a suppliant posture to empty their bags of tributary gold before the throne of the Scythian monarch.[f] The spectators must have confessed the truth and propriety of the alteration; and were perhaps tempted to apply, on this singular occasion, the well-known fable of the dispute between the lion and the man.[g]

[e] In describing this war of Attila, a war so famous, but so imperfectly known, I have taken for my guides two learned Italians, who considered the subject with some peculiar advantages; Sigonius, de Imperio Occidentali, l. xiii, in his works, tom. i. p. 495-502; and Muratori Annali d'Italia, tom. iv, p. 229-236, 8vo edition.

[f] This article may be found under two different articles (μεδιολανον and κορινθος) of the miscellaneous compilation of Suidas.

[g] Leo respondit, humanâ hoc pictum manû:
Videres hominem dejectum, si pingere
Leones scirent.
Appendix ad Phædrum. Fab. xxv.
The lion in Phædrus very foolishly appeals from pictures to the amphitheatre: and I am glad to observe, that the native taste of La Fontaine (l. iii, fable x.) has omitted this most lame and impotent conclusion.

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Foundation of the republic of Venice.

It is a saying worthy of the ferocious pride of Attila, that the grass never grew on the spot where his horse had trod. Yet the savage destroyer undesignedly laid the foundations of a republic, which revived, in the feudal state of Europe, the art and spirit of commercial industry. The celebrated name of Venice, or Venetia,[h] was formerly diffused over a large and fertile province of Italy, from the confines of Pannonia to the river Addua, and from the Po to the Rhætian and Julian Alps. Before the irruption of the barbarians, fifty Venetian cities flourished in peace and prosperity: Aquileia was placed in the most conspicuous station: but the ancient dignity of Padua was supported by agriculture and manufactures; and the property of five hundred citizens, who were entitled to the equestrian rank, must have amounted, at the strictest computation, to one million seven hundred thousand pounds. Many families of Aquileia, Padua, and the adjacent towns, who fled from the sword of the Huns, found a safe, though obscure, refuge in the neighbouring islands.[i] At the extremity of the gulf,

[h] Paul the Deacon (de Gestis Langobard. l. ii, c. 14, p. 784) describes the provinces of Italy about the end of the eighth century. *Venetia* non solum in paucis insulis quas nunc Venetias dicimus, constat; sed ejus terminus a Pannoniæ finibus usque Adduam fluvium protelatur. The history of that province till the age of Charlemagne forms the first and most interesting part of the Verona Illustrata (p. 1-388), in which the marquis Scipio Maffei has shewn himself equally capable of enlarged views and minute disquisitions.

[i] This emigration is not attested by any contemporary evidence: but the fact is proved by the event, and the circumstances might be preserved by tradition. The citizens of Aquileia retired to the isle of Gradus, those of Padua to Rivus Altus, or Rialto, where the city of Venice was afterwards built, &c.

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where the Hadriatic feebly imitates the tides of the ocean, near an hundred small islands are separated by shallow water from the continent, and protected from the waves by several long slips of land, which admit the entrance of vessels through some secret and narrow channels.[k] Till the middle of the fifth century, these remote and sequestered spots remained without cultivation, with few inhabitants, and almost without a name. But the manners of the Venetian fugitives, their arts and their government, were gradually formed by their new situation; and one of the epistles of Cassiodorius,[l] which describes their condition about seventy years afterwards, may be considered as the primitive monument of the republic. The minister of Theodoric compares them, in his quaint declamatory style, to water fowl, who had fixed their nests on the bosom of the waves; and though he allows, that the Venetian provinces had formerly contained many noble families, he insinuates, that they were now reduced by misfortune to the same level of humble poverty. Fish was the common, and almost the universal,

[k] The topography and antiquities of the Venetian islands, from Gradus to Clodia, or Chioggia, are accurately stated in the Dissertatio Chorographica de Italiâ Medii Ævi, p. 151-155.

[l] Cassiodor. Variar. l. 12, epist. 24. Maffei (Verona Illustrata, part i, p. 240-254) has translated and explained this curious letter, in the spirit of a learned antiquarian and a faithful subject, who considered Venice as the only legitimate offspring of the Roman republic. He fixes the date of the epistle, and consequently the prefecture, of Cassiodorius, A. D. 523; and the marquis's authority has the more weight, as he had prepared an edition of his works, and actually published a dissertation on the true orthography of his name. See Osservazioni Letteraire, tom. ii, p. 290-339.

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food of every rank: their only treasure consisted in the plenty of salt, which they extracted from the sea: and the exchange of that commodity, so essential to human life, was substituted in the neighbouring markets to the currency of gold and silver. A people, whose habitations might be doubtfully assigned to the earth or water, soon became alike familiar with the two elements; and the demands of avarice succeeded to those of necessity. The islanders, who, from Grado to Chiozza, were intimately connected with each other, penetrated into the heart of Italy, by the secure, though laborious, navigation of the rivers and inland canals. Their vessels, which were continually increasing in size and number, visited all the harbours of the gulf; and the marriage, which Venice annually celebrates with the Hadriatic, was contracted in her early infancy. The epistle of Cassiodorius, the prætorian prefect, is addressed to the maritime tribunes; and he exhorts them, in a mild tone of authority, to animate the zeal of their countrymen for the public service, which required their assistance to transport the magazines of wine and oil from the province of Istria to the royal city of Ravenna. The ambiguous office of these magistrates is explained by the tradition, that in the twelve principal islands, twelve tribunes, or judges, were created by an annual and popular election. The existence of the Venetian republic under the Gothic kingdom of Italy, is attested by the same authentic record, which annihilates their lofty

claim of original and perpetual independence.[m] CHAP. XXXV.

Attila gives peace to the Romans.

The Italians, who had long since renounced the exercise of arms, were surprised, after forty years peace, by the approach of a formidable barbarian, whom they abhorred, as the enemy of their religion, as well as of their republic. Amidst the general consternation, Ætius alone was incapable of fear; but it was impossible that he should achieve, alone, and unassisted, any military exploits worthy of his former renown. The barbarians who had defended Gaul, refused to march to the relief of Italy; and the succours promised by the eastern emperor were distant and doubtful. Since Ætius, at the head of his domestic troops, still maintained the field, and harassed or retarded the march of Attila, he never shewed himself more truly great, than at the time when his conduct was blamed by an ignorant and ungrateful people.[n] If the mind of Valentinian had been susceptible of any generous sentiments, he would have chosen such a

[m] See, in the second volume of Amelot de la Houssaie Histoire du Gouvernement de Venise, a translation of the famous *Squittinio*. This book, which has been exalted far above its merits, is stained in every line with the disingenuous malevolence of party: but the principal evidence, genuine and apocryphal, is brought together, and the reader will easily choose the fair medium.

[n] Sirmond (Not. ad Sidon. Apollin. p. 19) has published a curious passage from the Chronicle of Prosper. Attila redintegratis viribus, quas in Gallia amiserat, Italiam ingredi per Pannonias intendit; nihil duce nostro Ætio secundum prioris belli opera prospiciente, &c. He reproaches Ætius with neglecting to guard the Alps, and with a design to abandon Italy: but this rash censure may at least be counterbalanced by the favourable testimonies of Idatius and Isidore.

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general for his example and his guide. But the timid grandson of Theodosius, instead of sharing the dangers, escaped from the sound of war; and his hasty retreat from Ravenna to Rome, from an impregnable fortress to an open capital, betrayed his secret intention of abandoning Italy, as soon as the danger should approach his imperial person. This shameful abdication was suspended, however, by the spirit of doubt and delay, which commonly adheres to pusillanimous counsels, and sometimes corrects their pernicious tendency. The western emperor, with the senate and people of Rome, embraced the more salutary resolution of deprecating, by a solemn and suppliant embassy, the wrath of Attila. This important commission was accepted by Avienus, who, from his birth and riches, his consular dignity, the numerous train of his clients, and his personal abilities, held the first rank in the Roman senate. The specious and artful character of Avienus,[o] was admirably qualified to conduct a negotiation either of public or private interest: his colleague Trigetius had exercised the prætorian prefecture of Italy; and Leo, bishop of Rome, consented to expose his life for the safety of his flock. The genius of Leo[p] was ex-

[o] See the original portraits of Avienus, and his rival Basilius, delineated and contrasted in the epistles (*i.* 9, p. 22) of Sidonius. He had studied the characters of the two chiefs of the senate; but he attached himself to Basilius, as the more solid and disinterested friend.

[p] The character and principles of Leo may be traced in one hundred and forty-one original epistles, which illustrate the ecclesiastical history of his long and busy pontificate, from A. D. 440 to 461. See Dupin, Bibliotheque Ecclesiastique, tom. iii, part ii, p. 129–165.

ercised and displayed in the public misfortunes; and he has deserved the appellation of *Great*, by the successful zeal with which he laboured to establish his opinions and his authority, under the venerable names of orthodox faith and ecclesiastical discipline. The Roman ambassadors were introduced to the tent of Attila, as he lay encamped at the place where the slow-winding Mincius is lost in the foaming waves of the lake Benacus,[q] and trampled, with his Scythian cavalry, the farms of Catullus and Virgil.[r] The barbarian monarch listened with favourable, and even respectful, attention; and the deliverance of Italy was purchased by the immense ransom, or dowry, of the princess Honoria. The state of his army might facilitate the treaty, and hasten his retreat. Their martial spirit was relaxed by the wealth and indolence of a warm climate. The shepherds of the North, whose ordinary food consisted of milk and raw flesh, indulged themselves too freely in the use of bread, of wine, and of meat prepared and seasoned by the arts of cookery; and the progress of disease

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——— tardis ingens ubi flexibus errat
Mincius, et tenerâ prætexit arundine ripas
* * * * * * * * *
Anne lacus tantos, te Lari maxime, teque
Fluctibus, et fremitu assurgens *Benace* marino.

[r] The Marquis Maffei (Verona Illustrata, part i, p. 95, 129, 201; part ii, p. 2, 6) has illustrated with taste and learning this interesting topography. He places the interview of Attila and St Leo near Ariolica, or Ardelica, now Peschiera, at the conflux of the lake and river; ascertains the villa of Catullus, in the delightful peninsula of Sarmio, and discovers the Andes of Virgil, in the village of Bandes, precisely situate quâ se subducere colles incipiunt, where the Veronese hills imperceptibly slope down into the plain of Mantua.

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revenged in some measure the injuries of the Italians.[s] When Attila declared his resolution of carrying his victorious arms to the gates of Rome, he was admonished by his friends, as well as by his enemies, that Alaric had not long survived the conquest of the eternal city. His mind, superior to real danger, was assaulted by imaginary terrors; nor could he escape the influence of superstition, which had so often been subservient to his designs.[t] The pressing eloquence of Leo, his majestic aspect, and sacerdotal robes, excited the veneration of Attila for the spiritual father of the Christians. The apparition of the two apostles, St Peter and St Paul, who menaced the barbarian with instant death, if he rejected the prayer of their successor, is one of the noblest legends of ecclesiastical tradition. The safety of Rome might deserve the interposition of celestial beings; and some indulgence is due to a fable, which has been represented by the pencil of Raphael, and the chissel of Algardi.[u]

[s] Si statim infesto agmine urbem petiissent, grande discrimen esset: sed in Venetiâ quo fere tractu Italia mollissima est, ipsâ soli cœlique clementiâ robur elanguit. Adhoc panis usû carnisque coctæ, et dulcedine vini mitigatos, &c. This passage of Florus (iii, 3) is still more applicable to the Huns than to the Cimbri, and it may serve as a commentary on the *celestial* plague, with which Idatius and Isidore have afflicted the troops of Attila.

[t] The historian Priscus had positively mentioned the effect which this example produced on the mind of Attila. Jornandes, c. 42, p. 673.

[u] The picture of Raphael is in the Vatican; the basso (or perhaps the alto) relievo of Algardi, on one of the altars of St Peter (see Dubos, Reflexions sur la Poesie et sur la Peinture, tom. i, p. 519, 520). Baronius (Annal. Eccles. A. D. 452, N°. 57, 58) bravely sustains the truth of the apparition; which is rejected, however, by the most learned and pious catholics.

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The death of Attila, A. D. 453.

Before the king of the Huns evacuated Italy, he threatened to return more dreadful, and more implacable, if his bride, the princess Honoria, was not delivered to his ambassadors within the term stipulated by the treaty. Yet, in the meanwhile, Attila relieved his tender anxiety, by adding a beautiful maid, whose name was Ildico, to the list of his innumerable wives.* Their marriage was celebrated with barbaric pomp and festivity, at his wooden palace beyond the Danube; and the monarch, oppressed with wine and sleep, retired at a late hour, from the banquet to the nuptial bed. His attendants continued to respect his pleasures, or his repose, the greatest part of the ensuing day, till the unusual silence alarmed their fears and suspicions; and, after attempting to awaken Attila by loud and repeated cries, they at length broke into the royal apartment. They found the trembling bride sitting by the bedside, hiding her face with her veil, and lamenting her own danger, as well as the death of the king, who had expired du-

* Attila, ut Priscus historicus refert, extinctionis suæ tempore, puellam Ildico nomine, decoram valde, sibi matrimonium post innumerabiles uxores . . . socians. Jornandes, c. 49, p. 683, 684. He afterwards adds (c. 50, p. 686), Filii Attilæ, quorum per licentiam libidinis pœne populus fuit. Polygamy has been established among the Tartars of every age. The rank of plebeian wives is regulated only by their personal charms: and the faded matron prepares, without a murmur, the bed which is destined for her blooming rival. But in royal families, the daughters of khans communicate to their sons a prior right of inheritance. See Genealogical History, p. 406, 407, 408.

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ring the night.[7] An artery had suddenly burst; and as Attila lay in a supine posture, he was suffocated by a torrent of blood, which, instead of finding a passage through the nostrils, regurgitated into the lungs and stomach. His body was solemnly exposed in the midst of the plain, under a silken pavilion, and the chosen squadrons of the Huns, wheeling round in measured evolutions, chanted a funeral song to the memory of a hero, glorious in his life, invincible in his death, the father of his people, the scourge of his enemies, and the terror of the world. According to their national custom, the barbarians cut off a part of their hair, gashed their faces with unseemly wounds, and bewailed their valiant leader as he deserved, not with the tears of women, but with the blood of warriors. The remains of Attila were inclosed within three coffins, of gold, of silver, and of iron, and privately buried in the night: the spoils of nations were thrown into his grave; the captives who had opened the ground were inhumanly massacred; and the same Huns who had indulged such excessive grief, feasted, with dissolute and intemperate mirth, about the recent sepulchre of their king. It was reported at Constantinople, that on

[7] The report of her *guilt* reached Constantinople, where it obtained a very different name; and Marcellinus observes, that the tyrant of Europe was slain in the night by the hand, and the knife, of a woman. Corneille, who has adapted the genuine account to his tragedy, describes the irruption of blood in forty bombast lines, and Attila exclaims, with ridiculous fury,

——S'il ne veut s'arreter (*his blood*),
(Dit-il) on me payera ce qui m'en va couter.

the fortunate night in which he expired, Marcian beheld in a dream the bow of Attila broken asunder: and the report may be allowed to prove, how seldom the image of that formidable barbarian was absent from the mind of a Roman emperor.[z] CHAP. XXXV.

The revolution which subverted the empire of the Huns, established the fame of Attila, whose genius alone had sustained the huge and disjointed fabric. After his death the boldest chieftains aspired to the rank of kings; the most powerful kings refused to acknowledge a superior; and the numerous sons, whom so many various mothers bore to the deceased monarch, divided and disputed, like a private inheritance, the sovereign command of the nations of Germany and Scythia. The bold Ardaric felt and represented the disgrace of this servile partition; and his subjects, the warlike Gepidæ, with the Ostrogoths, under the conduct of three valiant brothers, encouraged their allies to vindicate the rights of freedom and royalty. In a bloody and decisive conflict on the banks of the river Netad, in Pannonia, the lance of the Gepidæ, the sword of the Goths, the arrows of the Huns, the Suevic infantry, the light arms of the Heruli, and the heavy weapons of the Alani, encountered or supported each other; and the victory of Ardaric was accompanied with the slaughter of thirty thousand of his enemies. Ellac, the Destruction of his empire.

[z] The curious circumstances of the death and funeral of Attila, are related by Jornandes (c. 49, p. 683, 684, 685), and were probably transcribed from Priscus.

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eldest son of Attila, lost his life and crown in the memorable battle of Netad: his early valour had raised him to the throne of the Acatzires, a Scythian people, whom he subdued; and his father, who loved the superior merit, would have envied the death of Ellac.* His brother Dengisich, with an army of Huns, still formidable in their flight and ruin, maintained his ground above fifteen years on the banks of the Danube. The palace of Attila, with the old country of Dacia, from the Carpathian hills to the Euxine, became the seat of a new power, which was erected by Ardaric, king of the Gepidæ. The Pannonian conquests, from Vienna to Sirmium, were occupied by the Ostrogoths; and the settlements of the tribes, who had so bravely asserted their native freedom, were irregularly distributed, according to the measure of their respective strength. Surrounded and oppressed by the multitude of his father's slaves, the kingdom of Dengisich was confined to the circle of his waggons; his desperate courage urged him to invade the eastern empire; he fell in battle; and his head, ignominiously exposed in the Hippodrome, exhibited a grateful spectacle to the people of Constantinople. Attila had fondly or super-

* See Jornandes, de Rebus Geticis, c. 50, p. 685, 686, 687, 688. His distinction of the national arms is curious and important. Nam ibi admirandum reor fuisse spectaculum, ubi cernere erat cunctis, pugnantem Gothum ense furentem. Gepidam in vulnere suorum cuncta tela frangentem, Suevum pede, Hunnum sagittâ præsumere, Alanum gravi, Herulum levi armaturâ aciem instruere. I am not precisely informed of the situation of the river Netad.

stitiously believed, that Irnac, the youngest of his sons, was destined to perpetuate the glories of his race. The character of that prince, who attempted to moderate the rashness of his brother Dengisich, was more suitable to the declining condition of the Huns; and Irnac, with his subject hordes, retired into the heart of Lesser Scythia. They were soon overwhelmed by a torrent of new barbarians, who followed the same road which their own ancestors had formerly discovered. The *Geougen*, or Avares, whose residence is assigned by the Greek writers to the shores of the ocean, impelled the adjacent tribes; till at length the Igours of the North, issuing from the cold Siberian regions, which produce the most valuable furs, spread themselves over the desert, as far as the Boristhenes and Caspian gates; and finally extinguished the empire of the Huns.[b]

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Such an event might contribute to the safety of the eastern empire, under the reign of a prince, who conciliated the friendship, without forfeiting the esteem, of the barbarians. But the emperor of the West, the feeble and dissolute Valentinian, who had reached his thirty-fifth year without attaining the age of reason or courage, abused this apparent security to undermine the foundations of his own throne, by the murder of the patrician Ætius. From the instinct of a base

Valentinian murders the patrician Ætius, A. D. 454;

[b] Two modern historians have thrown much new light on the ruin and division of the empire of Attila. M. de Buat, by his laborious and minute diligence (tom. viii, p. 3-31, 68-94); and M. de Guignes, by his extraordinary knowledge of the Chinese language and writers. See Hist. des Huns, tom. ii, p. 315-319.

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and jealous mind, he hated the man who was universally celebrated as the terror of the barbarians, and the support of the republic; and his new favourite, the eunuch Heraclius, awakened the emperor from the supine lethargy, which might be disguised, during the life of Placidia,[c] by the excuse of filial piety. The fame of Ætius, his wealth and dignity, the numerous and martial train of barbarian followers, his powerful dependants, who filled the civil offices of the state, and the hopes of his son Gaudentius, who was already contracted to Eudoxia, the emperor's daughter, had raised him above the rank of a subject. The ambitious designs, of which he was secretly accused, excited the fears, as well as the resentment, of Valentinian. Ætius himself, supported by the consciousness of his merit, his services, and perhaps his innocence, seems to have maintained a haughty and indiscreet behaviour. The patrician offended his sovereign by an hostile declaration; he aggravated the offence, by compelling him to ratify, with a solemn oath, a treaty of reconciliation and alliance; he proclaimed his suspicions, he neglected his safety; and from a vain confidence that the enemy whom he despised, was incapable even of a manly crime, he rashly ven-

[c] Placidia died at Rome, November 27, A. D. 450. She was buried at Ravenna, where her sepulchre, and even her corpse, seated in a chair of Cyprus wood, were preserved for ages. The empress received many compliments from the orthodox clergy; and St Peter Chrysologus assured her, that her zeal for the Trinity had been recompensed by an august trinity of children. See Tillemont, Hist. des Emp. tom. vi, p. 240.

tured his person in the palace of Rome. Whilst he urged, perhaps with intemperate vehemence, the marriage of his son; Valentinian, drawing his sword, the first sword he had ever drawn, plunged it in the breast of a general who had saved his empire: his courtiers and eunuchs ambitiously struggled to imitate their master; and Ætius, pierced with an hundred wounds, fell dead in the royal presence. Boethius, the prætorian prefect, was killed at the same moment; and before the event could be divulged, the principal friends of the patrician were summoned to the palace, and separately murdered. The horrid deed, palliated by the specious names of justice and necessity, was immediately communicated by the emperor to his soldiers, his subjects, and his allies. The nations, who were strangers or enemies to Ætius, generously deplored the unworthy fate of a hero: the barbarians, who had been attached to his service, dissembled their grief and resentment; and the public contempt, which had been so long entertained for Valentinian, was at once converted into deep and universal abhorrence. Such sentiments seldom pervade the walls of a palace; yet the emperor was confounded by the honest reply of a Roman, whose approbation he had not disdained to solicit. "I am ignorant, sir, of your motives and "provocations; I only know, that you have "acted like a man who cuts off his right hand "with his left."[d]

[d] Actium Placidus mactavit semivir amens, is the expression of Sidonius (Panegyr. Avit. 359). The poet knew the world, and was

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and ravishes the wife of Maximus.

The luxury of Rome seems to have attracted the long and frequent visits of Valentinian; who was consequently more despised at Rome, than in any other part of his dominions. A republican spirit was insensibly revived in the senate, as their authority, and even their supplies, became necessary for the support of his feeble government. The stately demeanour of an hereditary monarch offended their pride; and the pleasures of Valentinian were injurious to the peace and honour of noble families. The birth of the empress Eudoxia was equal to his own, and her charms and tender affection deserved those testimonies of love, which her inconstant husband dissipated in vague and unlawful amours. Petronius Maximus, a wealthy senator of the Anician family, who had been twice consul, was possessed of a chaste and beautiful wife: her obstinate resistance served only to irritate the desires of Valentinian; and he resolved to accomplish them either by stratagem or force. Deep gaming was one of the vices of the court: the emperor, who, by chance or contrivance, had gained from Maximus a considerable sum, uncourteously exacted his ring as a security for the debt; and sent it by a trusty messenger to his wife, with an order, in her husband's name, that she should immediately attend the empress Eudoxia. The unsuspecting wife of Maximus was conveyed in her litter to the imperial palace; the emissaries of her impatient lover conducted her to a remote and silent

not inclined to flatter a minister who had injured or disgraced Avitus and Majorian, the successive heroes of his song.

bed-chamber; and Valentinian violated, without remorse, the laws of hospitality. Her tears, when she returned home; her deep affliction; and her bitter reproaches against her husband, whom she considered as the accomplice of his own shame, excited Maximus to a just revenge; the desire of revenge was stimulated by ambition; and he might reasonably aspire, by the free suffrage of the Roman senate, to the throne of a detested and despicable rival. Valentinian, who supposed that every human breast was devoid, like his own, of friendship and gratitude, had imprudently admitted among his guards several domestics and followers of Ætius. Two of these, of barbarian race, were persuaded to execute a sacred and honourable duty, by punishing with death the assassin of their patron; and their intrepid courage did not long expect a favourable moment. Whilst Valentinian amused himself in the field of Mars, with the spectacle of some military sports, they suddenly rushed upon him with drawn weapons, dispatched the guilty Heraclius, and stabbed the emperor to the heart, without the least opposition from his numerous train, who seemed to rejoice in the tyrant's death. Such was the fate of Valentinian III,[e] the last Roman emperor of the

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Death of Valentinian, A. D. March 16.

[e] With regard to the cause and circumstances of the deaths of Ætius and Valentinian, our information is dark and imperfect. Procopius (de Bell. Vandal. l. i, c. 4, p. 186, 187, 188) is a fabulous writer for the events which precede his own memory. His narrative must therefore be supplied and corrected by five or six Chronicles, none of which were composed in Rome or Italy; and which can only express, in broken sentences, the popular rumours, as they were conveyed to Gaul, Spain, Africa, Constantinople, or Alexandria.

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family of Theodosius. He faithfully imitated the hereditary weakness of his cousin and his two uncles, without inheriting the gentleness, the purity, the innocence, which alleviate, in their characters, the want of spirit and ability. Valentinian was less excusable, since he had passions, without virtues: even his religion was questionable; and though he never deviated into the paths of heresy, he scandalized the pious Christians by his attachment to the profane arts of magic and divination.

Symptoms of decay and ruin.

As early as the time of Cicero and Varro, it was the opinion of the Roman augurs, that the *twelve vultures*, which Romulus had seen, represented the *twelve centuries*, assigned for the fatal period of his city.[f] This prophecy, disregarded, perhaps, in the season of health and prosperity, inspired the people with gloomy apprehensions, when the twelfth century, clouded with disgrace and misfortune, was almost elapsed;[g] and even posterity must acknowledge with some surprise, that the arbitrary interpretation of an accidental

[f] This interpretation of Vettius, a celebrated augur, was quoted by Varro, in the xviiith book of his Antiquities. Censorinus, de Die Natali, c. 17, p. 90, 91, edit. Havercamp.

[g] According to Varro, the twelfth century would expire A. D. 447; but the uncertainty of the true era of Rome might allow some latitude of anticipation or delay. The poets of the age, Claudian (de Bell. Gètico, 265), and Sidonius (in Panegyr. Avit. 357), may be admitted as fair witnesses of the popular opinion.

Jam reputant annos, interceptoque volatu
Vulturis, incidunt properatis sæcula metis.

\- - - - - - - - -

Jam prope fata tui bissenas Vulturis alas
Implebant; scis namque tuos, scis Roma, labores.

See Dubos, Hist. Critique, tom. i, p. 340–346.

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or fabulous circumstance, has been seriously verified in the downfal of the western empire. But its fall was announced by a clearer omen than the flight of vultures; the Roman government appeared every day less formidable to its enemies, more odious and oppressive to its subjects.[h] The taxes were multiplied with the public distress; economy was neglected in proportion as it became necessary; and the injustice of the rich shifted the unequal burden from themselves to the people, whom they defrauded of the *indulgences* that might sometimes have alleviated their misery. The severe inquisition, which confiscated their goods, and tortured their persons, compelled the subjects of Valentinian to prefer the more simple tyranny of the barbarians, to fly to the woods and mountains, or to embrace the vile and abject condition of mercenary servants. They abjured and abhorred the name of Roman citizens, which had formerly excited the ambition of mankind. The Armorican provinces of Gaul, and the greatest part of Spain, were thrown into a state of disorderly independence, by the confederations of the Bagaudæ; and the imperial ministers pursued with proscriptive laws, and ineffectual arms, the rebels whom they had made.[i] If all the barbarian conquerors had

[h] The fifth book of Salvian is filled with pathetic lamentations, and vehement invectives. His immoderate freedom serves to prove the weakness, as well as the corruption, of the Roman government. His book was published after the loss of Africa (A. D. 439), and before Attila's war (A. D. 451).

[i] The Bagaudæ of Spain, who fought pitched battles with the Roman troops, are repeatedly mentioned in the Chronicle of Idatius.

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been annihilated in the same hour, their total destruction would not have restored the empire of the West: and if Rome still survived, she survived the loss of freedom, of virtue, and of honour.

Salvian has described their distress and rebellion in very forcible language. Itaque nomen civium Romanorum ... nunc ultro repudiatur ac fugitur, nec vile tamen sed etiam abominabile pœne habetur .... Et hinc est ut etiam hi qui ad barbaros non confugiunt, barbari tamen esse coguntur, scilicet ut est pars magna Hispanorum, et non minima Gallorum .... De Bagaudis nunc mihi sermo est, qui per malos judices et cruentos spoliati, afflicti, necati postquam jus Romanæ libertatis amiserant, etiam honorem Romani nominis perdiderunt .... Vocamus rebelles, vocamus perditos quos esse compulimus criminosos. De Gubernat. Dei, l. v, p. 158, 159.

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Sack of Rome by Genseric, king of the Vandals—His naval depredations—Succession of the last emperors of the West, Maximus, Avitus, Majorian, Severus, Anthemius, Olybrius, Glycerius, Nepos, Augustulus—Total extinction of the western empire—Reign of Odoacer, the first barbarian king of Italy.

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Naval power of the Vandals, A. D. 439-455.

The loss or desolation of the provinces, from the ocean to the Alps, impaired the glory and greatness of Rome; her internal prosperity was irretrievably destroyed by the separation of Africa. The rapacious Vandals confiscated the patrimonial estates of the senators, and intercepted the regular subsidies, which relieved the poverty, and encouraged the idleness, of the plebeians. The distress of the Romans was soon aggravated by an unexpected attack; and the province, so long cultivated for their use by industrious and obedient subjects, was armed against them by an ambitious barbarian. The Vandals and Alani, who followed the successful standard of Genseric, had acquired a rich and fertile territory, which stretched along the coast above ninety days journey from Tangier to Tripoli; but their narrow limits were pressed and confined, on either side, by the sandy desert and the Mediterranean. The discovery and conquest

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of the black nations, that might dwell beneath the torrid zone, could not tempt the rational ambition of Genseric: but he cast his eyes towards the sea; he resolved to create a naval power, and his bold resolution was executed with steady and active perseverance. The woods of mount Atlas afforded an inexhaustible nursery of timber; his new subjects were skilled in the arts of navigation and ship-building; he animated his daring Vandals to embrace a mode of warfare which would render every maritime country accessible to their arms; the Moors and Africans were allured by the hopes of plunder; and, after an interval of six centuries, the fleets that issued from the port of Carthage again claimed the empire of the Mediterranean. The success of the Vandals, the conquest of Sicily, the sack of Palermo, and the frequent descents on the coast of Leucania, awakened and alarmed the mother of Valentinian, and the sister of Theodosius. Alliances were formed; and armaments, expensive and ineffectual, were prepared for the destruction of the common enemy; who reserved his courage to encounter those dangers which his policy could not prevent or elude. The designs of the Roman government were repeatedly baffled by his artful delays, ambiguous promises, and apparent concessions; and the interposition of his formidable confederate the king of the Huns, recalled the emperors from the conquest of Africa to the care of their domestic safety. The revolutions of the palace, which left the western empire without a defender, and without a lawful prince, dispelled the apprehensions, and

stimulated the avarice, of Genseric. He immediately equipped a numerous fleet of Vandals and Moors, and cast anchor at the mouth of the Tyber, about three months after the death of Valentinian, and the elevation of Maximus to the imperial throne.

The character and reign of the emperor Maximus, A. D. 455, March 17.

The private life of the senator Petronius Maximus,[a] was often alleged as a rare example of human felicity. His birth was noble and illustrious, since he descended from the Anician family; his dignity was supported by an adequate patrimony in land and money; and these advantages of fortune were accompanied with liberal arts and decent manners, which adorn or imitate the inestimable gifts of genius and virtue. The luxury of his palace and table was hospitable and elegant. Whenever Maximus appeared in public, he was surrounded by a train of grateful and obsequious clients:[b] and it is possible that among these clients, he might deserve and possess some real friends. His merit was rewarded by the favour of the prince and senate: he thrice exercised the office of prætorian prefect of Italy; he was twice invested with the consulship, and he obtained the rank of patrician. These civil honours were not incompatible with the enjoyment of leisure and

[a] Sidonius Apollinaris composed the thirteenth epistle of the second book, to refute the paradox of his friend Serranus, who entertained a singular, though generous, enthusiasm for the deceased emperor. This epistle, with some indulgence, may claim the praise of an elegant composition; and it throws much light on the character of Maximus.

[b] Clientum, prævia, pedisequa, circumfusa, populositas, is the train which Sidonius himself (l. i, epist. 9) assigns to another senator of consular rank.

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tranquillity; his hours, according to the demands of pleasure or reason, were accurately distributed by a water-clock; and this avarice of time may be allowed to prove the sense which Maximus entertained of his own happiness. The injury which he received from the emperor Valentinian, appears to excuse the most bloody revenge. Yet a philosopher might have reflected, that, if the resistance of his wife had been sincere, her chastity was still inviolate, and that it could never be restored if she had consented to the will of the adulterer. A patriot would have hesitated, before he plunged himself and his country into those inevitable calamities, which must follow the extinction of the royal house of Theodosius. The imprudent Maximus disregarded these salutary considerations; he gratified his resentment and ambition; he saw the bleeding corpse of Valentinian at his feet; and he heard himself saluted emperor by the unanimous voice of the senate and people. But the day of his inauguration was the last day of his happiness. He was imprisoned (such is the lively expression of Sidonius) in the palace; and after passing a sleepless night, he sighed that he had attained the summit of his wishes, and aspired only to descend from the dangerous elevation. Oppressed by the weight of the diadem, he communicated his anxious thoughts to his friend and questor Fulgentius; and when he looked back with unavailing regret on the secure pleasures of his former life, the emperor exclaimed,—"O fortunate Da-

"mocles,[c] thy reign began and ended with the "same dinner:" a well-known allusion, which Fulgentius afterwards repeated as an instructive lesson for princes and subjects. CHAP. XXXVI.

The reign of Maximus continued about three months. His hours, of which he had lost the command, were disturbed by remorse, or guilt, or terror, and his throne was shaken by the seditions of the soldiers, the people, and the confederate barbarians. The marriage of his son Palladius with the eldest daughter of the late emperor, might tend to establish the hereditary succession of his family; but the violence which he offered to the empress Eudoxia, could proceed only from the blind impulse of lust or revenge. His own wife, the cause of these tragic events, had been seasonably removed by death; and the widow of Valentinian was compelled to violate her decent mourning, perhaps her real grief, and to submit to the embraces of a presumptuous usurper, whom she suspected as the assassin of her deceased husband. These suspicions were soon justified by the indiscreet confession of Maximus himself; and he wantonly provoked the hatred of his reluctant bride, who was still conscious that she descended from a line of emperors. From the East, however, Eudoxia His death, A. D. 455, June 12.

[c] Districtus ensis cui super impiâ
Cervice pendet, non *Siculæ dapes*
Dulcem elaborabunt saporem;
Non avium Citharæque cantus
Somnum reducent. Horat. Carm. iii, 1.
Sidonius concludes his letter with the story of Damocles, which Cicero (Tusculan. v. 20, 21) had so inimitably told.

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could not hope to obtain any effectual assistance; her father and her aunt Pulcheria were dead; her mother languished at Jerusalem in disgrace and exile; and the sceptre of Constantinople was in the hands of a stranger. She directed her eyes towards Carthage; secretly implored the aid of the king of the Vandals; and persuaded Genseric to improve the fair opportunity of disguising his rapacious designs by the specious names of honour, justice, and compassion.[d] Whatever abilities Maximus might have shewn in a subordinate station, he was found incapable of administering an empire; and though he might easily have been informed of the naval preparations which were made on the opposite shores of Africa, he expected with supine indifference the approach of the enemy, without adopting any measures of defence, of negotiation, or of a timely retreat. When the Vandals disembarked at the mouth of the Tiber, the emperor was suddenly roused from his lethargy by the clamours of a trembling and exasperated multitude. The only hope which presented itself to his astonished mind was that of a precipitate flight, and he exhorted the senators to imitate the example of their prince. But no sooner did Maximus ap-

[d] Notwithstanding the evidence of Procopius, Evagrius, Idatius, Marcellinus, &c. the learned Muratori (Annali d'Italia, tom. iv, p. 249) doubts the reality of this invitation, and observes, with great truth—"Non si può dir quanto sia facile il popolo a sognare e spac-"ciar voci false." But his argument, from the interval of time and place, is extremely feeble. The figs which grew near Carthage were produced to the senate of Rome on the third day.

pear in the streets, than he was assaulted by a shower of stones: a Roman, or a Burgundian soldier, claimed the honour of the first wound; his mangled body was ignominiously cast into the Tyber; the Roman people rejoiced in the punishment which they had inflicted on the author of the public calamities; and the domestics of Eudoxia signalized their zeal in the service of their mistress.[e]

Sack of Rome by the Vandals, A. D. 455, June 15-29.

On the third day after the tumult, Genseric boldly advanced from the port of Ostia to the gates of the defenceless city. Instead of a sally of the Roman youth, there issued from the gates an unarmed and venerable procession of the bishop at the head of his clergy.[f] The fearless spirit of Leo, his authority and eloquence, *again* mitigated the fierceness of a barbarian conqueror; the king of the Vandals promised to spare the unresisting multitude, to protect the buildings from fire, and to exempt the captives from torture; and although such orders were neither seriously given, nor strictly obeyed, the mediation of Leo was glorious to himself, and in some degree beneficial to his country. But Rome and its inhabitants were delivered to the licenti

[e] - - - Infidoque tibi Burgundio ductu
Extorquet trepidas mactandi principis iras.
Sidon. in Panegyr. Avit. 442.
A remarkable line, which insinuates that Rome and Maximus were betrayed by their Burgundian mercenaries.

[f] The apparent success of Pope Leo may be justified by Prosper, and the *Historia Miscellan.*; but the improbable notion of Baronius (A. D 455, N°. 13), that Genseric spared the three apostolic churches, is not countenanced even by the doubtful testimony of the *Liber Pontificalis.*

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ousness of the Vandals and Moors, whose blind passions revenged the injuries of Carthage. The pillage lasted fourteen days and nights; and all that yet remained of public or private wealth, of sacred or prophane treasure, was diligently transported to the vessels of Genseric. Among the spoils, the splendid relics of two temples, or rather of two religions, exhibited a memorable example of the vicissitude of human and divine things. Since the abolition of paganism, the capitol had been violated and abandoned; yet the statues of the gods and heroes were still respected, and the curious roof of gilt bronze was reserved for the rapacious hands of Genseric.[g] The holy instruments of the Jewish worship,[h] the gold table, and the gold candlestick with seven branches, originally framed according to the particular instructions of God himself, and which were placed in the sanctuary of his temple, had been ostentatiously displayed to the Roman people in the triumph of Titus. They were afterwards deposited in the temple of Peace;

[g] The profusion of Catulus, the first who gilt the roof of the capitol, was not universally approved (Plin. Hist. Natur. xxxiii, 18): but it was far exceeded by the emperor's, and the external gilding of the temple cost Domitian 12,000 talents (2,400,000l.). The expressions of Claudian and Rutilius (*luce metalli æmula . . . fastigia astris*, and *confunduntque vagos delubra micantia visus*) manifestly prove that this splendid covering was not removed either by the Christians or the Goths (see Donatus, Roma Antiqua, l. ii, c. 6, p. 125). It should seem that the roof of the capitol was decorated with gilt statues, and chariots drawn by four horses.

[h] The curious reader may consult the learned and accurate treatise of Hadrian Reland, de Spoliis Templi Hierosolymitani in Arcû Titiano Romæ conspicuis, in 12mo, Trajecti ad Rhenum, 1716.

and at the end of four hundred years, the spoils of Jerusalem were transferred from Rome to Carthage, by a barbarian who derived his origin from the shores of the Baltic. These ancient monuments might attract the notice of curiosity, as well as of avarice. But the christian churches, enriched and adorned by the prevailing superstition of the times, afforded more plentiful materials for sacrilege; and the pious liberality of Pope Leo, who melted six silver vases, the gift of Constantine, each of an hundred pound weight, is an evidence of the damage which he attempted to repair. In the forty-five years, that had elapsed since the Gothic invasion, the pomp and luxury of Rome were in some measure restored; and it was difficult either to escape, or to satisfy, the avarice of a conqueror, who possessed leisure to collect, and ships to transport, the wealth of the capital. The imperial ornaments of the palace, the magnificent furniture and wardrobe, the side-boards of massy plate, were accumulated with disorderly rapine: the gold and silver amounted to several thousand talents; yet even the brass and copper were laboriously removed. Eudoxia herself, who advanced to meet her friend and deliverer, soon bewailed the imprudence of her own conduct. She was rudely stripped of her jewels; and the unfortunate empress, with her two daughters, the only surviving remains of the great Theodosius, was compelled, as a captive, to follow the haughty Vandal; who immediately hoisted sail, and returned with a prosperous navigation to the port

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of Carthage.[j] Many thousand Romans of both sexes, chosen for some useful or agreeable qualifications, reluctantly embarked on board the fleet of Genseric; and their distress was aggravated by the unfeeling barbarians, who, in the division of the booty, separated the wives from the husbands, and the children from their parents. The charity of Deogratias, bishop of Carthage,[k] was their only consolation and support. He generously sold the gold and silver plate of the church to purchase the freedom of some, to alleviate the slavery of others, and to assist the wants and infirmities of a captive multitude, whose health was impaired by the hardships which they had suffered in their passage from Italy to Africa. By his order two spacious churches were converted into hospitals: the sick were distributed in convenient beds, and liberally supplied with food and medicines; and the aged prelate repeated his visits both in the day and night, with an assiduity that surpassed his strength, and a tender sympathy which enhanced the value of his services. Compare this scene with the field of Cannæ; and judge between Hannibal and the successor of St Cyprian.[l]

The vessel which transported the relics of the capitol, was the only one of the whole fleet that suffered shipwreck. If a bigotted sophist, a pagan bigot, had mentioned the accident, he might have rejoiced that this cargo of sacrilege was lost in the sea.

[k] See Victor Vitensis, de Persecut. Vandal. l. i, c. 8, p. 11, 12, edit. Ruinart. Deogratias governed the church of Carthage only three years. If he had not been privately buried, his corpse would have been torn piecemeal by the mad devotion of the people.

[l] The general evidence for the death of Maximus, and the sack of Rome by the Vandals, is comprised in Sidonius (Panegyr. Avit.

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The deaths of Ætius and Valentinian had relaxed the ties which held the barbarians of Gaul in peace and subordination. The sea-coast was infested by the Saxons; the Alemanni and the Franks advanced from the Rhine to the Seine; and the ambition of the Goths seemed to meditate more extensive and permanent conquests. The emperor Maximus relieved himself, by a judicious choice, from the weight of these distant cares; he silenced the solicitations of his friends, listened to the voice of fame, and promoted a stranger to the general command of the forces in Gaul. Avitus,[m] the stranger, whose merit was so nobly rewarded, descended from a wealthy and honourable family in the diocese of Auvergne. The convulsions of the times urged him to embrace, with the same ardour, the civil and military professions; and the indefatigable youth blended the studies of literature and jurisprudence with the exercise of arms and hunting. Thirty years of his life were laudably spent in the public service; he alternately displayed his talents in war and negotiation; and the soldier of Ætius, after executing the most important embassies, was raised to the station of prætorian prefect of Gaul. Either the merit of Avitus excited envy, or his moderation was desi-

The emperor Avitus, A. D. 455, July 10.

441–450); Procopius (de Bell. Vandal. l. i, c. 4, 5, p. 188, 189, and l. ii, c. 9, p. 255); Evagrius (l. ii, c. 7); Jornandes (de Reb. Geticis, c. 45, p. 677), and the Chronicles of Idatius, Prosper, Marcellinus, and Theophanes, under the proper year.

[m] The private life and elevation of Avitus must be deduced, with becoming suspicion, from the panegyric pronounced by Sidonius Apollinaris, his subject, and his son-in-law.

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rous of repose, since he calmly retired to an estate, which he possessed in the neighbourhood of Clermont. A copious stream, issuing from the mountain, and falling headlong in many a loud and foaming cascade, discharged its waters into a lake about two miles in length, and the villa was pleasantly seated on the margin of the lake. The baths, the porticos, the summer and winter apartments, were adapted to the purposes of luxury and use; and the adjacent country afforded the various prospects of woods, pastures, and meadows.[n] In this retreat, where Avitus amused his leisure with books, rural sports, the practice of husbandry, and the society of his friends,[o] he received the imperial diploma, which constituted him master-general of the cavalry and infantry of Gaul. He assumed the military command; the barbarians suspended their fury; and whatever means he might employ, whatever concessions he might be forced to make, the people enjoyed the benefits of actual tranquillity. But the fate of Gaul depended on the Visigoths; and the Roman

[n] After the example of the younger Pliny, Sidonius (l. ii, c. 2) has laboured the florid, prolix, and obscure description of his villa, which bore the name (*Avitacum*), and had been the property, of Avitus. The precise situation is not ascertained. Consult however the notes of Savaron and Sirmond.

[o] Sidonius (l. ii, epist. 9) has described the country life of the Gallic nobles, in a visit which he made to his friends, whose estates were in the neighbourhood of Nismes. The morning-hours were spent in the *sphæristerium*, or tennis-court; or in the library, which was furnished with *Latin* authors, profane and religious; the former for the men, the latter for the ladies. The table was twice served, at dinner and supper, with hot meat (boiled and roast) and wine. During the intermediate time, the company slept, took the air on horseback, and used the warm bath.

general, less attentive to his dignity than to the public interest, did not disdain to visit Thoulouse in the character of an ambassador. He was received with courteous hospitality by Theodoric, the king of the Goths; but while Avitus laid the foundations of a solid alliance with that powerful nation, he was astonished by the intelligence, that the emperor Maximus was slain, and that Rome had been pillaged by the Vandals. A vacant throne, which he might ascend without guilt or danger, tempted his ambition;[p] and the Visigoths were easily persuaded to support his claim by their irresistible suffrage. They loved the person of Avitus; they respected his virtues; and they were not insensible of the advantage, as well as honour, of giving an emperor to the West. The season was now approaching, in which the annual assembly of the seven provinces was held at Arles: their deliberations might perhaps be influenced by the presence of Theodoric and his martial brothers; but their choice would naturally incline to the most illustrious of their countrymen. Avitus, after a decent resistance, accepted the imperial diadem from the representatives of Gaul; and his election was ratified by the acclamations of the barbarians and provincials. The formal consent of Marcian, emperor of the East, was solicited and obtained: but the senate, Rome, and Italy,

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A. D. 455. August 15.

[p] Seventy lines of panegyric (505–575), which describe the importunity of Theodoric and of Gaul, struggling to overcome the modest reluctance of Avitus, are blown away by three words of an honest historian,—Romanum *ambisset* imperium (Greg. Turon. l. ii, c. 11, in tom. ii, p. 168).

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though humbled by their recent calamities, submitted with a secret murmur to the presumption of the Gallic usurper.

Character of Theodoric, king of the Visigoths, A. D. 453-466.

Theodoric, to whom Avitus was indebted for the purple, had acquired the Gothic sceptre by the murder of his elder brother Torismond; and he justified this atrocious deed by the design which his predecessor had formed of violating his alliance with the empire.[q] Such a crime might not be incompatible with the virtues of a barbarian; but the manners of Theodoric were gentle and humane; and posterity may contemplate without terror the original picture of a Gothic king, whom Sidonius had intimately observed, in the hours of peace and of social intercourse. In an epistle, dated from the court of Thoulouse, the orator satisfies the curiosity of one of his friends, in the following description:[r]—"By the majesty of his appearance, Theodoric would command the respect of those "who are ignorant of his merit; and although "he is born a prince, his merit would dignify a private station. He is of a middle stature, "his body appears rather plump than fat, and "in his well-proportioned limbs, agility is united

[q] Isidore, archbishop of Seville, who was himself of the blood-royal of the Goths, acknowledges, and almost justifies (Hist. Goth. p. 718), the crime which their slave Jornandes had basely dissembled (c. 43, p. 678).

[r] This elaborate description (l. i, ep. ii, p. 2-7) was dictated by some political motive. It was designed for the public eye, and had been shewn by the friends of Sidonius, before it was inserted in the collection of his epistles. The first book was published separately. See Tillemont, Memoires Eccles. tom. xvi, p. 264.

" with muscular strength.* If you examine his
" countenance, you will distinguish a high fore-
" head, large shaggy eye-brows, an aquiline nose,
" thin lips, a regular set of white teeth, and a
" fair complexion, that blushes more frequent-
" ly from modesty than from anger. The or-
" dinary distribution of his time, as far as it is
" exposed to the public view, may be concisely
" represented. Before day-break, he repairs,
" with a small train, to his domestic chapel,
" where the service is performed by the Arian
" clergy; but those who presume to interpret
" his secret sentiments, consider this assiduous
" devotion as the effect of habit and policy.
" The rest of the morning is employed in the
" administration of his kingdom. His chair is
" surrounded by some military officers of decent
" aspect and behaviour: the noisy crowd of his
" barbarian guards occupies the hall of audience;
" but they are not permitted to stand within the
" veils, or curtains, that conceal the council-
" chamber from vulgar eyes. The ambassadors
" of the nations are successively introduced:
" Theodoric listens with attention, answers them
" with discreet brevity, and either announces
" or delays, according to the nature of their bu-
" siness, his final resolution. About eight (the
" second hour) he rises from his throne, and vi-

* I have suppressed, in this portrait of Theodoric, several minute circumstances, and technical phrases, which could be tolerable, or indeed intelligible, to those only who, like the contemporaries of Sidonius, had frequented the markets where naked slaves were exposed to sale (Dubos Hist. Critique, tom. i, p. 404).

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" sits either his treasury or his stables. If he " chooses to hunt, or at least exercise himself " on horseback, his bow is carried by a favour- " ite youth; but when the game is marked, he " bends it with his own hand, and seldom misses " the object of his aim: as a king, he disdains " to bear arms in such ignoble warfare; but as " a soldier, he would blush to accept any mili- " tary service which he could perform himself. " On common days, his dinner is not different " from the repast of a private citizen; but eve- " ry Saturday, many honourable guests are in- " vited to the royal table, which, on these occa- " sions, is served with the elegance of Greece, " the plenty of Gaul, and the order and dili- " gence of Italy.[t] The gold or silver plate is " less remarkable for its weight, than for the " brightness and curious workmanship: the taste " is gratified without the help of foreign and " costly luxury; the size and number of the " cups of wine are regulated with a strict regard " to the laws of temperance; and the respectful " silence that prevails, is interrupted only by " grave and instructive conversation. After din- " ner, Theodoric sometimes indulges himself in " a short slumber; and as soon as he wakes, he " calls for the dice and tables, encourages his " friends to forget the royal majesty, and is de- " lighted when they freely express the passions, " which are excited by the incidents of play. At

[t] Videas ibi elegantiam Græcam, abundantiam Gallicanam, celeritatem Italam; publicam pompam, privatam diligentiam, regiam disciplinam.

"this game, which he loves as the image of war, "he alternately displays his eagerness, his skill, "his patience, and his cheerful temper. If he "loses, he laughs; he is modest and silent if he "wins. Yet, notwithstanding this seeming in- "difference, his courtiers choose to solicit any "favour in the moments of victory; and I my- "self, in my applications to the king, have de- "rived some benefit from my losses.[u] About "the ninth hour (three o'clock) the tide of bu- "siness again returns, and flows incessantly till "after sunset, when the signal of the royal sup- "per dismisses the weary crowd of suppliants "and pleaders. At the supper, a more familiar "repast, buffoons and pantomimes, are some- "times introduced, to divert, not to offend, the "company, by their ridiculous wit: but female "singers, and the soft effeminate modes of mu- "sic, are severely banished, and such martial "tunes as animate the soul to deeds of valour "are alone grateful to the ear of Theodoric. He "retires from table; and the nocturnal guards "are immediately posted at the entrance of the "treasury, the palace, and the private apart- "ments."

His expedition into Spain, A. D. 456.

When the king of the Visigoths encouraged Avitus to assume the purple, he offered his person and his forces as a faithful soldier of the

[u] Tunc etiam ego aliquid obsecraturus felicitor vincor, et mihi tabula perit ut causa salvetur. Sidonius of Auvergne was not a subject of Theodoric; but he might be compelled to solicit either justice or favour at the court of Thoulouse.

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republic.[x] The exploits of Theodoric soon convinced the world, that he had not degenerated from the warlike virtues of his ancestors. After the establishment of the Goths in Aquitain, and the passage of the Vandals into Africa, the Suevi, who had fixed their kingdom in Gallicia, aspired to the conquest of Spain, and threatened to extinguish the feeble remains of the Roman dominion. The provincials of Carthagena and Tarragona, afflicted by an hostile invasion, represented their injuries and their apprehensions. Count Fronto was dispatched, in the name of the emperor Avitus, with advantageous offers of peace and alliance; and Theodoric interposed his weighty mediation, to declare that, unless his brother-in-law, the king of the Suevi, immediately retired, he should be obliged to arm in the cause of justice and of Rome. "Tell him," replied the haughty Rechiarius, "that I despise "his friendship and his arms; but that I shall "soon try, whether he will dare to expect my "arrival under the walls of Thoulouse." Such a challenge urged Theodoric to prevent the bold designs of his enemy: he passed the Pyrenees at the head of the Visigoths: the Franks and Burgundians served under his standard; and though he professed himself the dutiful servant of Avitus, he privately stipulated for himself and

[x] Theodoric himself had given a solemn and voluntary promise of fidelity, which was understood both in Gaul and Spain.

——— Romæ sum, te duce, Amicus,
Principe te, MILES.

Sidon. Panegyr. Avit. 511.

his successors, the absolute possession of the Spanish conquests. The two armies, or rather the two nations, encountered each other on the banks of the river Urbicus, about twelve miles from Astorga; and the decisive victory of the Goths appeared for a while to have extirpated the name and kingdom of the Suevi. From the field of battle Theodoric advanced to Braga, their metropolis, which still retained the splendid vestiges of its ancient commerce and dignity.[r] His entrance was not polluted with blood, and the Goths respected the chastity of their female captives, more especially of the consecrated virgins: but the greatest part of the clergy and people were made slaves, and even the churches and altars were confounded in the universal pillage. The unfortunate king of the Suevi had escaped to one of the ports of the ocean; but the obstinacy of the winds opposed his flight; he was delivered to his implacable rival; and Rechiarius, who neither desired nor expected mercy, received, with manly constancy, the death which he would probably have inflicted. After this bloody sacrifice to policy or resentment, Theodoric carried his victorious arms as far as Merida, the principal town of Lusitania, without meeting any resistance, except from the miracu-

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[r] Quæque sinû pelagi jactat se Bracara dives.
Auson. de Claris Urbibus, p. 245.
From the design of the king of the Suevi, it is evident that the navigation from the ports of Galicia to the Mediterranean was known and practised. The ships of Bracara, or Braga, cautiously steered along the coast, without daring to lose themselves in the Atlantic.

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lous powers of St Eulalia; but he was stopped in the full career of success, and recalled from Spain, before he could provide for the security of his conquests. In his retreat towards the Pyrenees, he revenged his disappointment on the country through which he passed; and, in the sack of Pollentia and Astorga, he shewed himself a faithless ally, as well as a cruel enemy. Whilst the king of the Visigoths fought and vanquished in the name of Avitus, the reign of Avitus had expired, and both the honour and the interest of Theodoric were deeply wounded by the disgrace of a friend, whom he had seated on the throne of the western empire.[z]

Avitus is deposed, A. D. 456, Oct. 16.

The pressing solicitations of the senate and people, persuaded the emperor Avitus to fix his residence at Rome, and to accept the consulship for the ensuing year. On the first day of January, his son-in-law, Sidonius Apollinaris, celebrated his praises in a panegyric of six hundred verses; but this composition, though it was rewarded with a brass statue,[a] seems to contain a very moderate proportion, either of genius or of truth. The poet, if we may degrade that sacred name, exaggerates the merit of a sovereign and a father; and his prophecy of a long and glorious reign was soon contradicted by the event.

[z] This Suevic war is the most authentic part of the Chronicle of Idatius, who, as bishop of Iria Flavia, was himself a spectator and a sufferer. Jornandes (c. 44, p. 675, 676, 677) has expatiated with pleasure on the Gothic victory.

[a] In one of the porticoes or galleries belonging to Trajan's library, among the statues of famous writers and orators. Sidon. Apoll. l. ix, epist. 16, p. 284. Carm. viii, p. 350.

Avitus, at a time when the imperial dignity was reduced to a pre-eminence of toil and danger, indulged himself in the pleasures of Italian luxury; age had not extinguished his amorous inclinations; and he is accused of insulting, with indiscreet and ungenerous raillery, the husbands whose wives he had seduced or violated.[b] But the Romans were not inclined, either to excuse his faults, or to acknowledge his virtues. The several parts of the empire became every day more alienated from each other; and the stranger of Gaul was the object of popular hatred and contempt. The senate asserted their legitimate claim in the election of an emperor; and their authority, which had been originally derived from the old constitution, was again fortified by the actual weakness of a declining monarchy. Yet even such a monarchy might have resisted the votes of an unarmed senate, if their discontent had not been supported, or perhaps inflamed, by Count Ricimer, one of the principal commanders of the barbarian troops, who formed the military defence of Italy. The daughter of Wallia, king of the Visigoths, was the mother of Ricimer; but he was descended, on the father's side, from the nation of the Suevi:[a] his pride, or pa- CHAP. XXXVI.

[b] Luxuriose agere volens a senatoribus projectus est, is the concise expression of Gregory of Tours (l. ii, c. xi, in tom. ii, p. 168.). An old Chronicle (in tom. ii, p. 649) mentions an indecent jest of Avitus, which seems more applicable to Rome than to Treves.

[a] Sidonius (Panegyr. Anthem. 302, &c.) praises the royal birth of Ricimer, the lawful heir, as he chooses to insinuate, both of the Gothic and Suevic kingdoms.

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triotism, might be exasperated by the misfortunes of his countrymen: and he obeyed, with reluctance, an emperor, in whose elevation he had not been consulted. His faithful and important services against the common enemy, rendered him still more formidable;[d] and, after destroying, on the coast of Corsica, a fleet of Vandals, which consisted of sixty galleys, Ricimer returned in triumph with the appellation of the Deliverer of Italy. He chose that moment to signify to Avitus, that his reign was at an end; and the feeble emperor, at a distance from his Gothic allies, was compelled, after a short and unavailing struggle, to abdicate the purple. By the clemency, however, or the contempt, of Ricimer,[e] he was permitted to descend from the throne, to the more desirable station of bishop of Placentia: but the resentment of the senate was still unsatisfied; and their inflexible severity pronounced the sentence of his death. He fled towards the Alps, with the humble hope, not of arming the Visigoths in his cause, but of securing his person and treasures in the sanctuary of Julian, one of the tutelar saints of Auvergne.[f] Disease, or the hand of the executioner, arrested

[d] See the Chronicle of Idatius. Jornandes (c. xliv, p. 676) styles him, with some truth, virum egregium, et pene tunc in Italiâ ad exercitum singularem.

[e] Parcens innocentiæ Aviti, is the compassionate, but contemptuous, language of Victor Tunnunensis (in Chron. Apud Scaliger Euseb.) In another place, he calls him, vir totius simplicitatis. This commendation is more humble, but it is more solid and sincere, than the praises of Sidonius.

[f] He suffered, as it is supposed, in the persecution of Diocletian (Tillemont, Mem. Eccles. tom. v, p. 279, 696). Gregory of Tours,

him on the road; yet his remains were decently transported to Brivas, or Brioude, in his native province, and he reposed at the feet of his holy patron.[g] Avitus left only one daughter, the wife of Sidonius Apollinaris, who inherited the patrimony of his father-in-law; lamenting, at the same time, the disappointment of his public and private expectations. His resentment prompted him to join, or at least to countenance, the measures of a rebellious faction in Gaul; and the poet had contracted some guilt, which it was incumbent on him to expiate, by a new tribute of flattery to the succeeding emperor.[h] CHAP. XXXVI.

Character and elevation of Majorian, A. D. 457.

The successor of Avitus presents the welcome discovery of a great and heroic character, such as sometimes arise in a degenerate age, to vindicate the honour of the human species. The emperor Majorian has deserved the praises of his contemporaries, and of posterity; and these

his peculiar votary, has dedicated to the glory of Julian the Martyr, an entire book (de Gloria Martyrum, l. ii, in Max. Bibliot Patrum, tom. xi, p. 861-871), in which he relates about fifty foolish miracles performed by his relics.

[g] Gregory of Tours (l. ii, c. xi, p. 168) is concise, but correct, in the reign of his countryman. The words of Idatius, "caret imperio, "caret et vita," seem to imply, that the death of Avitus was violent; but it must have been secret, since Evagrius (l. ii, c. 7) could suppose that he died of the plague.

[h] After a modest appeal to the examples of his brethren, Virgil and Horace, Sidonius honestly confesses the debt, and promises payment.

Sic mihi diverso nuper sub Marte cadenti
Jussisti placido Victor ut essem animo.
Serviat ergo tibi servati lingua poetæ,
Atque meæ vitæ laus tua sit pretium.
Sidon. Apoll. carm. iv, p. 308.

See Dubos, Hist. Critique, tom. i, p. 448, &c.

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praises may be strongly expressed in the words of a judicious and disinterested historian.—"That "he was gentle to his subjects; that he was ter- "rible to his enemies; and that he excelled in "*every* virtue, *all* his predecessors who had reign- "ed over the Romans."[1] Such a testimony may justify at least the panegyric of Sidonius; and we may acquiesce in the assurance, that, although the obsequious orator would have flattered, with equal zeal, the most worthless of princes, the extraordinary merit of his object confined him, on this occasion, within the bounds of truth.[k] Majorian derived his name from his maternal grandfather, who, in the reign of the great Theodosius, had commanded the troops of the Illyrian frontier. He gave his daughter in marriage to the father of Majorian, a respectable officer, who administered the revenues of Gaul with skill and integrity; and generously preferred the friendship of Ætius, to the tempting offers of an insidious court. His son, the future emperor, who was educated in the profession of arms, displayed, from his early youth, intrepid courage, premature

[1] The words of Procopius deserve to be transcribed; ουτος γαρ ὁ Μαιορινος ξυμπαντας τους πωποτε Ρωμαιων βιβαζιλιυκοτας υπεραιρων αρετη παση; and afterwards, ανηρ τα μεν εις τους υπηκους μετριος γεγενως, φοβερος δε τα ες τους πολεμιους (de Bell. Vandal. l. i, c. 7, p. 194); a concise, but comprehensive, definition of royal virtue.

[k] The Panegyric was pronounced at Lyons before the end of the year 458, while the emperor was still consul. It has more art than genius, and more labour than art. The ornaments are false or trivial; the expression is feeble and prolix; and Sidonius wants the skill to exhibit the principal figure in a strong and distinct light. The private life of Majorian occupies about two hundred lines, 107–305.

wisdom, and unbounded liberality in a scanty fortune. He followed the standard of Ætius, contributed to his success, shared, and sometimes eclipsed, his glory, and at last excited the jealousy of the patrician, or rather of his wife, who forced him to retire from the service.[1] Majorian, after the death of Ætius, was recalled, and promoted; and his intimate connection with Count Ricimer was the immediate step by which he ascended the throne of the western empire. During the vacancy that succeeded the abdication of Avitus, the ambitious barbarian, whose birth excluded him from the imperial dignity, governed Italy, with the title of Patrician; resigned, to his friend, the conspicuous station of master-general of the cavalry and infantry; and, after an interval of some months, consented to the unanimous wish of the Romans, whose favour Majorian had solicited by a recent victory over the Alemanni.[m] He was invested with the purple at Ravenna; and the epistle which he addressed to the senate, will best describe his situation and his sentiments. "Your election, Conscript Fathers! and the ordinance of the most

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[1] She pressed his immediate death, and was scarcely satisfied with his disgrace. It should seem, that Ætius, like Belisarius and Marlborough, was governed by his wife; whose fervent piety, though it might work miracles (Gregor. Turon. l. ii, c. 7, p. 162), was not incompatible with base and sanguinary counsels.

[m] The Alemanni had passed the Rhætian Alps, and were defeated in the *Campi Canini*, or Valley of Bellinzone, through which the Tesin flows, in its descent from Mount Adula, to the Lago Maggiore (Cluver. Italia Antiq. tom. i, p. 100, 101.) This boasted victory over *nine hundred* barbarians (Panegyr. Majorian, 373, &c.) betrays the extreme weakness of Italy.

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"valiant army, have made me your emperor.[a] "May the propitious Deity direct and prosper "the counsels and events of my administration, "to your advantage, and to the public welfare! "For my own part, I did not aspire, I have sub-"mitted, to reign; nor should I have discharged "the obligations of a citizen, if I had refused, "with base and selfish ingratitude, to support "the weight of those labours, which were im-"posed by the republic. Assist, therefore, the "prince whom you have made; partake the du-"ties which you have enjoined; and may our "common endeavours promote the happiness of "an empire, which I have accepted from your "hands. Be assured, that, in our times, justice "shall resume her ancient vigour, and that vir-"tue shall become not only innocent but meri-"torious. Let none, except the authors them-"selves, be apprehensive of *delations*,[b] which, as "a subject, I have always condemned, and, as a "prince, will severely punish. Our own vigi-"lance, and that of our father, the patrician Ri-"cimer, shall regulate all military affairs, and

[a] Imperatorem me factum, P. C. electionis vestræ arbitrio, et fortissimi exercitus ordinatione agnoscite (Novell. Majorian, tit. iii, p. 34, ad Calcem Cod. Theodos.). Sidonius proclaims the unanimous voice of the empire.

——Postquam ordine vobis
Ordo omnis regnum dederat; *plebs*, *curia*, *miles*,
Et *collega* simul.—— 386.

This language is ancient and constitutional; and we may observe, that the *clergy* were not yet considered as a distinct order of the state.

[b] Either dilationes, or delationes, would afford a tolerable reading; but there is much more sense and spirit in the latter, to which I have therefore given the preference.

"provide for the safety of the Roman world, "which we have saved from foreign and domes- "tic enemies.[p] You now understand the max- "ims of my government: you may confide in "the faithful love and sincere assurances of a "prince, who has formerly been the companion "of your life and dangers; who still glories in "the name of senator, and who is anxious, that "you should never repent of the judgment which "you have pronounced in his favour." The emperor, who, amidst the ruins of the Roman world, revived the ancient language of law and liberty, which Trajan would not have disclaimed, must have derived those generous sentiments from his own heart; since they were not suggested to his imitation by the customs of his age, or the example of his predecessors.[q]

His salutary laws, A. D. 457-461.

The private and public actions of Majorian are very imperfectly known: but his laws, remarkable for an original cast of thought and expression, faithfully represent the character of a sovereign, who loved his people, who sympathized in their distress, who had studied the causes of the decline of the empire, and who was capable of applying (as far as such reformation was

[p] Ab externo hoste et a domesticâ clade liberavimus: by the latter, Majorian must understand the tyranny of Avitus; whose death he consequently avowed as a meritorious act. On this occasion, Sidonius is fearful and obscure; he describes the twelve Cæsars, the nations of Africa, &c. that he may escape the dangerous name of Avitus (305-369.)

[q] See the whole edict or epistle of Majorian to the senate (Novell. tit. iv, p. 34.). Yet the expression, *regnum nostrum*, bears some taint of the age, and does not mix kindly with the word *respublica*, which he frequently repeats.

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practicable), judicious and effectual remedies to the public disorders.[r] His regulations concerning the finances manifestly tended to remove, or at least to mitigate, the most intolerable grievances. I. From the first hour of his reign, he was solicitous (I translate his own words) to relieve the *weary* fortunes of the provincials, oppressed by the accumulated weight of indictions and superindictions.[s] With this view, he granted an universal amnesty, a final and absolute discharge of all arrears of tribute, of all debts, which, under any pretence, the fiscal officers might demand from the people. This wise dereliction of obsolete, vexatious, and unprofitable claims, improved and purified the sources of the public revenue; and the subject, who could now look back without despair, might labour with hope and gratitude for himself and for his country. II. In the assessment and collection of taxes, Majorian restored the ordinary jurisdiction of the provincial magistrates; and suppressed the extraordinary commissions which had been introduced, in the name of the emperor himself, or of the prætorian prefects. The favourite servants, who obtained such irregular powers, were insolent in their behaviour, and arbitrary in their demands: they affected to despise the subordi-

[r] See the laws of Majorian (they are only nine in number, but very long and various) at the end of the Theodosian Code, Novell. l. iv, p. 52–37. Godefroy has not given any commentary on these additional pieces.

[s] Fessas provincialium variâ atque multiplici tributorum exactione fortunas, et extraordinariis fiscalium solutionum oneribus attritas, &c. Novell. Majorian, tit. iv, p. 34.

nate tribunals, and they were discontented, if their fees and profits did not twice exceed the sum which they condescended to pay into the treasury. One instance of their extortion would appear incredible, were it not authenticated by the legislator himself. They exacted the whole payment in gold: but they refused the current coin of the empire, and would accept only such ancient pieces as were stamped with the names of Faustina or the Antonines. The subject, who was unprovided with these curious medals, had recourse to the expedient of compounding with their rapacious demands; or if he succeeded in the research, his imposition was doubled, according to the weight and value of the money of former times.[t] III. "The municipal corporation (says the emperor,) the lesser senates (so "antiquity has justly styled them,) deserve to "be considered as the heart of the cities, and "the sinews of the republic. And yet so low "are they now reduced, by the injustice of magistrates, and the venality of collectors, that "many of their members, renouncing their dignity and their country, have taken refuge in "distant and obscure exile." He urges, and even compels, their return to their respective cities; but he removes the grievance which had forced them to desert the exercise of their mu-

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[t] The learned Greaves (vol. i, p. 329, 330, 331) has found, by a diligent enquiry, that *aurei* of the Antonines weighed one hundred and eighteen, and those of the fifth century only sixty-eight, English grains. Majorian gives currency to all gold coin, excepting only the *Gallic solidus*, from its deficiency, not in the weight, but in the standard.

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nicipal functions. They are directed, under the authority of the provincial magistrates, to resume their office of levying the tribute; but, instead of being made responsible for the whole sum assessed on their district, they are only required to produce a regular account of the payments which they have actually received, and of the defaulters who are still indebted to the public. IV. But Majorian was not ignorant that these corporate bodies were too much inclined to retaliate the injustice and oppression which they had suffered; and he therefore revives the useful office of the *defenders of cities*. He exhorts the people to elect, in a full and free assembly, some man of discretion and integrity, who would dare to assert their privileges, to represent their grievances, to protect the poor from the tyranny of the rich, and to inform the emperor of the abuses that were committed under the sanction of his name and authority.

The edifices of Rome.

The spectator, who casts a mournful view over the ruins of ancient Rome, is tempted to accuse the memory of the Goths and Vandals, for the mischief which they had neither leisure, nor power, nor perhaps inclination, to perpetrate. The tempest of war might strike some lofty turrets to the ground; but the destruction which undermined the foundations of those massy fabrics, was prosecuted, slowly and silently, during a period of ten centuries; and the motives of interest that afterwards operated without shame or controul, were severely checked by the taste and spirit of the emperor Majorian. The decay

of the city had gradually impaired the value of the public works. The circus and theatres might still excite, but they seldom gratified, the desires of the people; the temples which had escaped the zeal of the Christians, were no longer inhabited either by gods or men; the diminished crowds of the Romans were lost in the immense space of their baths and porticoes; and the stately libraries and halls of justice became useless to an indolent generation, whose repose was seldom disturbed, either by study, or business. The monuments of consular, or imperial, greatness were no longer revered, as the immortal glory of the capital: they were only esteemed as an inexhaustible mine of materials, cheaper, and more convenient, than the distant quarry. Specious petitions were continually addressed to the easy magistrates of Rome, which stated the want of stones or bricks for some necessary service: the fairest forms of architecture were rudely defaced for the sake of some paltry, or pretended, repairs; and the degenerate Romans, who converted the spoil to their own emolument, demolished, with sacrilegious hands, the labours of their ancestors. Majorian, who had often sighed over the desolation of the city, applied a severe remedy to the growing evil.[u] He reserved to CHAP. XXXVI.

[u] The whole edict (Novell. Majorian, tit. vi, p. 35) is curious. "Antiquarum ædium dissipatur speciosa constructio; et ut aliquid "reparetur, magna diruuntur. Hinc jam occasio nascitur, ut etiam "unusquisque privatum ædificium construens, per gratiam judicum ". . . . præsumere de publicis locis necessaria, et transferre non "dubitet," &c. With equal zeal, but with less power, Petrarch, in

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the prince and senate the sole cognizance of the extreme cases which might justify the destruction of an ancient edifice; imposed a fine of fifty pounds of gold (two thousand pounds sterling) on every magistrate who should presume to grant such illegal and scandalous licence; and threatened to chastise the criminal obedience of their subordinate officers, by a severe whipping, and the amputation of both their hands.' In the last instance, the legislator might seem to forget the proportion of guilt and punishment; but his zeal arose from a generous principle, and Majorian was anxious to protect the monuments of those ages, in which he would have desired and deserved to live. The emperor conceived, that it was his interest to increase the number of his subjects; that it was his duty to guard the purity of the marriage-bed: but the means which he employed to accomplish these salutary purposes, are of an ambiguous, and perhaps exceptionable, kind. The pious maids, who consecrated their virginity to Christ, were restrained from taking the veil, till they had reached their fortieth year. Widows under that age were compelled to form a second alliance within the term of five years, by the forfeiture of half their wealth to their nearest relations, or to the state. Unequal marriages were condemned or annulled. The punishment of confiscation and exile was deemed so inadequate

the fourteenth century, repeated the same complaints (Vie de Petrarque, tom. i, p. 326, 327.). If I prosecute this History, I shall not be unmindful of the decline and fall of the *city* of Rome; an interesting object, to which my plan was originally confined.

to the guilt of adultery, that, if the criminal returned to Italy, he might, by the express declaration of Majorian, be slain with impunity.[x] CHAP. XXXVI.

Majorian prepares to invade Africa, A. D. 457.

While the emperor Majorian assiduously laboured to restore the happiness and virtue of the Romans, he encountered the arms of Genseric, from his character and situation, their most formidable enemy. A fleet of Vandals and Moors landed at the mouth of the Liris, or Garigliano; but the imperial troops surprised and attacked the disorderly barbarians, who were encumbered with the spoils of Campania; they were chased with slaughter to their ships, and their leader, the king's brother-in-law, was found in the number of the slain.[y] Such vigilance might announce the character of the new reign; but the strictest vigilance, and the most numerous forces, were insufficient to protect the long-extended coast of Italy from the depredations of a naval war. The public opinion had imposed a nobler and more arduous task on the genius of Majorian. Rome expected from him alone the restitution of Africa; and the design which he formed, of attacking the Vandals in their new settlements, was the result of bold and judicious policy. If the intrepid emperor could have infused his own spirit into the youth of Italy; if he could have

[x] The emperor chides the lenity of Rogatian, consular of Tuscany, in a style of acrimonious reproof, which sounds almost like personal resentment (Novell. tit. ix, p. 47.) The law of Majorian, which punished obstinate widows, was soon afterwards repealed by his successor Severus (Novell. Sever. tit. i, p. 37.)

[y] Sidon. Panegyr. Majorian, 385–440.

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revived in the field of Mars, the manly exercises in which he had always surpassed his equals; he might have marched against Genseric at the head of a *Roman* army. Such a reformation of national manners might be embraced by the rising generation; but it is the misfortune of those princes who laboriously sustain a declining monarchy, that, to obtain some immediate advantage, or to avert some impending danger, they are forced to countenance, and even to multiply, the most pernicious abuses. Majorian, like the weakest of his predecessors, was reduced to the disgraceful expedient of substituting barbarian auxiliaries in the place of his unwarlike subjects: and his superior abilities could only be displayed in the vigour and dexterity with which he wielded a dangerous instrument, so apt to recoil on the hand that used it. Besides the confederates, who were already engaged in the service of the empire, the fame of his liberality and valour attracted the nations of the Danube, the Borysthenes, and perhaps of the Tanais. Many thousands of the bravest subjects of Attila, the Gepidæ, the Ostrogoths, the Rugians, the Burgundians, the Suevi, the Alani, assembled in the plains of Liguria; and their formidable strength was balanced by their mutual animosities.[z] They passed the Alps in a severe winter. The emperor led the way on foot, and in complete armour;

[z] The review of the army, and passage of the Alps, contain the most tolerable passages of the Panegyric (470–552.). M. de Buat (Hist. des Peuples, &c. tom. viii, p. 49–55) is a more satisfactory commentator, than either Savaron or Sirmond.

sounding, with his long staff, the depth of the ice, or snow, and encouraging the Scythians, who complained of the extreme cold, by the cheerful assurance, that they should be satisfied with the heat of Africa. The citizens of Lyons had presumed to shut their gates: they soon implored, and experienced, the clemency of Majorian. He vanquished Theodoric in the field; and admitted to his friendship and alliance, a king whom he had found not unworthy of his arms. The beneficial, though precarious, reunion of the greatest part of Gaul and Spain, was the effect of persuasion, as well as of force;[a] and the independent Bagaudæ, who had escaped, or resisted, the oppression of former reigns, were disposed to confide in the virtues of Majorian. His camp was filled with barbarian allies; his throne was supported by the zeal of an affectionate people: but the emperor had foreseen, that it was impossible, without a maritime power, to achieve the conquest of Africa. In the first Punic war, the republic had exerted such incredible diligence, that, within sixty days after the first stroke of the axe had been given in the forest, a fleet of one hundred and sixty galleys proudly rode at anchor in the sea.[b] Under circumstances

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[a] Τα μεν οπλοις, τα δε λογοις, is the just and forcible distinction of Priscus (Excerpt. Legat. p. 42), in a short fragment, which throws much light on the history of Majorian. Jornandes has suppressed the defeat and alliance of the Visigoths, which were solemnly proclaimed in Gallicia; and are marked in the Chronicle of Idatius.

[b] Florus, l. ii, c. 2. He amuses himself with the poetical fancy, that the trees had been transformed into ships: and indeed the whole transaction, as it is related in the first book of Polybius, deviates too much from the probable course of human events.

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much less favourable, Majorian equalled the spirit and perseverance of the ancient Romans. The woods of the Appenine were felled; the arsenals and manufactures of Ravenna and Misenum were restored; Italy and Gaul vied with each other in liberal contributions to the public service; and the imperial navy of three hundred large galleys, with an adequate proportion of transports and smaller vessels, was collected in the secure and capacious harbour of Carthagena in Spain.[c] The intrepid countenance of Majorian animated his troops with a confidence of victory; and if we might credit the historian Procopius, his courage sometimes hurried him beyond the bounds of prudence. Anxious to explore, with his own eyes, the state of the Vandals, he ventured, after disguising the colour of his hair, to visit Carthage, in the character of his own ambassador: and Genseric was afterwards mortified by the discovery, that he had entertained and dismissed the emperor of the Romans. Such an anecdote may be rejected as an improbable fiction; but it is a fiction which would not have been imagined, unless in the life of a hero.[d]

Interea duplici texis dum littore classem
Inferno superoque mari, cedit omnis in æquor
Sylva tibi, &c.———

Sidon. Panegyr. Majorian. 441-461.

The number of ships, which Priscus fixes at 300, is magnified, by an indefinite comparison with the fleets of Agamemnon, Xerxes, and Augustus.

[d] Procopius de Bell. Vandal. l. i, c. 8, p. 194. When Genseric conducted his unknown guest into the arsenal of Carthage, the arms clashed of their own accord. Majorian had tinged his yellow locks with a black colour.

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Without the help of a personal interview, Genseric was sufficiently acquainted with the genius and designs of his adversary. He practised his customary arts of fraud and delay; but he practised them without success. His applications for peace became each hour more submissive, and perhaps more sincere; but the inflexible Majorian had adopted the ancient maxim, that Rome could not be safe, as long as Carthage existed in a hostile state. The king of the Vandals distrusted the valour of his native subjects, who were enervated by the luxury of the South:[e] he suspected the fidelity of the vanquished people, who abhorred him as an Arian tyrant; and the desperate measure, which he executed, of reducing Mauritania into a desert,[f] could not defeat the operations of the Roman emperor, who was at liberty to land his troops on any part of the African coast. But Genseric was saved from impending and inevitable ruin, by the treachery of some powerful subjects; envious, or apprehensive, of their master's success. Guided by their secret intelligence, he surprised the

The loss of his fleet.

——— Spoliisque potitus
Immensis, robur luxû jam perdidit omne,
Quo valuit dum pauper erat.

Panegyr. Majorian. 330.

He afterwards applies to Genseric, unjustly as it should seem, the vices of his subjects.

[f] He burnt the villages, and poisoned the springs (Priscus, p. 42.). Dubos (Hist. Critique, tom. i, p. 475) observes, that the magazines which the Moors buried in the earth, might escape his destructive search. Two or three hundred pits are sometimes dug in the same place; and each pit contains at least four hundred bushels of corn. Shaw's Travels, p. 139.

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unguarded fleet in the bay of Carthagena: many of the ships were sunk, or taken, or burnt; and the preparations of three years were destroyed in a single day.[s] After this event, the behaviour of the two antagonists shewed them superior to their fortune. The Vandal, instead of being elated by this accidental victory, immediately renewed his solicitations for peace. The emperor of the West, who was capable of forming great designs, and of supporting heavy disappointments, consented to a treaty, or rather to a suspension of arms; in the full assurance that, before he could restore his navy, he should be supplied with provocations to justify a second war. Majorian returned to Italy, to prosecute his labours for the public happiness; and, as he was conscious of his own integrity, he might long remain ignorant of the dark conspiracy which threatened his throne and his life. The recent misfortune of Carthagena sullied the glory which had dazzled the eyes of the multitude: almost every description of civil and military officers were exasperated against the Reformer, since they all derived some advantage from the abuses which he endeavoured to suppress; and the patrician Ricimer impelled the inconstant passions of the barbarians against a prince whom he esteemed and hated. The virtues of Majorian could not protect him from the impetuous sedition, which broke out in the camp near Tor-

[s] Idatius, who was safe in Gallicia from the power of Ricimer, boldly and honestly declares, Vandali per proditores admoniti, &c. He dissembles, however, the name of the traitor.

tona, at the foot of the Alps. He was compelled to abdicate the imperial purple; five days after his abdication, it was reported that he died of a dysentery;[h] and the humble tomb, which covered his remains, was consecrated by the respect and gratitude of succeeding generations.[i] The private character of Majorian inspired love and respect. Malicious calumny and satire excited his indignation, or, if he himself were the object, his contempt: but he protected the freedom of wit, and in the hours which the emperor gave to the familiar society of his friends, he could indulge his taste for pleasantry, without degrading the majesty of his rank.[k]

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His death, A. D. 461, August 7.

It was not perhaps without some regret, that Ricimer sacrificed his friend to the interest of his ambition; but he resolved, in a second choice, to avoid the imprudent preference of superior virtue and merit. At his command, the obsequious

Ricimer reigns under the name of Severus, A. D. 461–467.

[h] Procop. de Bell. Vandal. l. i, c. 8, p. 191. The testimony of Idatius is fair and impartial.—"Majorianum de Galliis Romam re-"deuntem, et Romano imperio vel nomini res necessarias ordinan-"tem; Richimer livore percitus, et *invidorum* consilio fultus, fraude "interficit circumventum." Some read *Sucvorum*, and I am unwilling to efface either of the words, as they express the different accomplices who united in the conspiracy against Majorian.

[i] See the Epigrams of Ennodius, No. cxxxv, inter Sirmond. Opera, tom. i, p. 1903. It is flat and obscure; but Ennodius was made bishop of Pavia fifty years after the death of Majorian, and his praise deserves credit and regard.

[k] Sidonius gives a tedious account (l. i, epist. xi, p. 25–31) of a supper at Arles, to which he was invited by Majorian, a short time before his death. He had no intention of praising a deceased emperor; but a casual disinterested remark,—"Subrisit Augustus; ut "erat, auctoritate servatâ, cum se communioni dedisset, joci ple-"nus," outweighs the six hundred lines of his venal panegyric.

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senate of Rome bestowed the imperial title on Libius Severus, who ascended the throne of the West, without emerging from the obscurity of a private condition. History has scarcely deigned to notice his birth, his elevation, his character, or his death. Severus expired, as soon as his life became inconvenient to his patron;[1] and it would be useless to discriminate his nominal reign in the vacant interval of six years, between the death of Majorian, and the elevation of Anthemius. During that period, the government was in the hands of Ricimer alone; and although the modest barbarian disclaimed the name of king, he accumulated treasures, formed a separate army, negotiated private alliances, and ruled Italy with the same independent and despotic authority which was afterwards exercised by Odoacer and Theodoric. But his dominions were bounded by the Alps; and two Roman generals, Marcellinus and Ægidius, maintained their allegiance to the republic, by rejecting, with disdain, the phantom which he styled an emperor. Marcellinus still adhered to the old religion; and the devout pagans, who secretly disobeyed the laws of the church and state, applauded his profound skill in the science of divination. But he possessed the more valuable

Revolt of Marcellinus in Dalmatia,

[1] Sidonius (Panegyr. Anthem. 317) dismisses him to heaven.

Auxerat Augustus naturæ lege Severus
Divorum numerum.———

And an old list of the emperors, composed about the time of Justinian, praises his piety, and fixes his residence at Rome (Sirmond Not. ad Sidon. p. 111, 112).

qualifications of learning, virtue, and courage;[m] the study of the Latin literature had improved his taste; and his military talents had recommended him to the esteem and confidence of the great Ætius, in whose ruin he was involved. By a timely flight, Marcellinus escaped the rage of Valentinian, and boldly asserted his liberty amidst the convulsions of the western empire. His voluntary, or reluctant, submission to the authority of Majorian was rewarded by the government of Sicily, and the command of an army, stationed in that island to oppose, or to attack, the Vandals: but his barbarian mercenaries, after the emperor's death, were tempted to revolt by the artful liberality of Ricimer. At the head of a band of faithful followers, the intrepid Marcellinus occupied the province of Dalmatia, assumed the title of patrician of the West, secured the love of his subjects by a mild and equitable reign, built a fleet, which claimed the dominion of the Hadriatic, and alternately alarmed the coasts of Italy and of Africa.[n] Ægidius, the master-general of Gaul, who equalled, or at least who imitated, the heroes of ancient Rome,[o] proclaimed his immortal resentment

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and of Ægidius in Gaul.

[m] Tillemont, who is always scandalized by the virtues of infidels, attributes this advantageous portrait of Marcellinus (which Suidas has preserved) to the partial zeal of some pagan historian (Hist. des Empereurs, tom. vi, p. 330.)

[n] Procopius de Bell. Vandal. l. i, c. 6, p. 191. In various circumstances of the life of Marcellinus, it is not easy to reconcile the Greek historian with the Latin Chronicles of the times.

[o] I must apply to Ægidius the praises which Sidonius (Panegyr. Majorian, 559) bestows on a nameless master-general, who com-

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against the assassins of his beloved master. A brave and numerous army was attached to his standard; and, though he was prevented by the arts of Ricimer, and the arms of the Visigoths, from marching to the gates of Rome, he maintained his independent sovereignty beyond the Alps, and rendered the name of Ægidius respectable both in peace and war. The Franks, who had punished with exile the youthful follies of Childeric, elected the Roman general for their king; his vanity, rather than his ambition, was gratified by that singular honour; and when the nation, at the end of four years, repented of the injury which they had offered to the Merovingian family, he patiently acquiesced in the restoration of the lawful prince. The authority of Ægidius ended only with his life; and the suspicions of poison and secret violence, which derived some countenance from the character of Ricimer, were eagerly entertained by the passionate credulity of the Gauls.[p]

Naval war of the Vandals, A. D. 461–467.

The kingdom of Italy, a name to which the western empire was gradually reduced, was af-

manded the rear-guard of Majorian. Idatius, from public report, commends his christian piety; and Priscus mentions (p. 42) his military virtues.

[p] Greg. Turon. l. ii, p. 12, in tom. ii, p. 168. The Pere Daniel, whose ideas were superficial and modern, has started some objections against the story of Childeric (Hist. de France, tom. i, Preface Historique, p. lxxviii, &c.): but they have been fairly satisfied by Dubos (Hist. Critique, tom. i, p. 460–510); and by two authors who disputed the prize of the Academy of Soissons (p. 131–177, 310–339.). With regard to the term of Childeric's exile, it is necessary either to prolong the life of Ægidius beyond the date assigned by the Chronicle of Idatius; or to correct the text of Gregory, by reading *quarto* anno, instead of *octavo*.

flicted, under the reign of Ricimer, by the incessant depredations of the Vandal pirates.[9] In the spring of each year they equipped a formidable navy in the port of Carthage; and Genseric himself, though in a very advanced age, still commanded in person the most important expeditions. His designs were concealed with impenetrable secrecy, till the moment that he hoisted sail. When he was asked by his pilot, what course he should steer; "Leave the determination to the winds (replied the barbarian, with pious arrogance); *they* will transport us to the guilty coast, whose inhabitants have provoked the divine justice." But if Genseric himself deigned to issue more precise orders, he judged the most wealthy to be the most criminal. The Vandals repeatedly visited the coasts of Spain, Liguria, Tuscany, Campania, Lucania, Bruttium, Apulia, Calabria, Venetia, Dalmatia, Epirus, Greece, and Sicily: they were tempted to subdue the island of Sardinia, so advantageously placed in the centre of the Mediterranean; and

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[9] The naval war of Genseric is described by Priscus (Excerpta Legation. p. 42); Procopius (de Bell. Vandal. l. i, c. 5, p. 189, 190, and c. 22, p. 226), Victor Vitensis (de Persecut. Vandal. l. i, c. 17, and Ruinart, p. 467–481), and in the three panegyrics of Sidonius, whose chronological order is absurdly transposed in the editions both of Savaron and Sirmon (Avit. Carm. vii, 411–451. Majorian, Carm. v, 327–350, 385, 440. Anthem. Carm. ii, 348, 386.). In one passage the poet seems inspired by his subject, and expresses a strong idea, by a lively image:

—— Hinc Vandalus hostis
Urget; et in nostrum numerosâ classe quotannis
Militat excidium; conversoque ordine Fati
Torrida Caucaseos infert mihi Byrsa furores.

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their arms spread desolation, or terror, from the columns of Hercules to the mouth of the Nile. As they were more ambitious of spoil than of glory, they seldom attacked any fortified cities, or engaged any regular troops in the open field. But the celerity of their motions enabled them, almost at the same time, to threaten and to attack the most distant objects, which attracted their desires; and as they always embarked a sufficient number of horses, they had no sooner landed, than they swept the dismayed country with a body of light cavalry. Yet, notwithstanding the example of their king, the native Vandals and Alani insensibly declined this toilsome and perilous warfare; the hardy generation of the first conquerors was almost extinguished, and their sons, who were born in Africa, enjoyed the delicious baths and gardens which had been acquired by the valour of their fathers. Their place was readily supplied by a various multitude of Moors and Romans, of captives and outlaws; and those desperate wretches, who had already violated the laws of their country, were the most eager to promote the atrocious acts which disgrace the victories of Genseric. In the treatment of his unhappy prisoners, he sometimes consulted his avarice, and sometimes indulged his cruelty; and the massacre of five hundred noble citizens of Zant, or Zacynthus, whose mangled bodies he cast into the Ionian sea, was imputed, by the public indignation, to his latest posterity.

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Negotiations with the eastern empire. A. D. 462, &c.

Such crimes could not be excused by any provocations; but the war, which the king of the Vandals prosecuted against the Roman empire, was justified by a specious and reasonable motive. The widow of Valentinian, Eudoxia, whom he had led captive from Rome to Carthage, was the sole heiress of the Theodosian house; her elder daughter, Eudocia, became the reluctant wife of Hunneric, his eldest son; and the stern father, asserting a legal claim, which could not easily be refuted or satisfied, demanded a just proportion of the imperial patrimony. An adequate, or at least a valuable, compensation, was offered by the eastern emperor, to purchase a necessary peace. Eudoxia, and her younger daughter, Placidia, were honourably restored, and the fury of the Vandals was confined to the limits of the western empire. The Italians, destitute of a naval force, which alone was capable of protecting their coasts, implored the aid of the more fortunate nations of the East; who had formerly acknowledged, in peace and war, the supremacy of Rome. But the perpetual division of the two empires had alienated their interest and their inclinations; the faith of a recent treaty was alleged; and the western Romans, instead of arms and ships, could only obtain the assistance of a cold and ineffectual mediation. The haughty Ricimer, who had long struggled with the difficulties of his situation, was at length reduced to address the throne of Constantinople, in the humble language of a subject; and Italy sub-

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mitted, as the price and security of the alliance, to accept a master from the choice of the emperor of the East.[r] It is not the purpose of the present chapter, or even of the present volume, to continue the distinct series of the Byzantine history; but a concise view of the reign and character of the emperor Leo, may explain the last efforts that were attempted to save the falling empire of the West.[s]

Leo, emperor of the East, A. D. 451-474.

Since the death of the younger Theodosius, the domestic repose of Constantinople had never been interrupted by war or faction. Pulcheria had bestowed her hand, and the sceptre of the East, on the modest virtue of Marcian: he gratefully reverenced her august rank and virgin chastity; and, after her death, he gave his people the example of the religious worship, that was due to the memory of the imperial saint.[t] Attentive

[r] The poet himself is compelled to acknowledge the distress of Ricimer.—

Præterea invictus Ricimer, quem publica fata
Respiciunt, *proprio* solus vix *Marte* repellit
Piratam per rura vagum———

Italy addresses her complaint to the Tiber, and Rome, at the solicitation of the river god, transports herself to Constantinople, renounces her ancient claims, and implores the friendship of Aurora, the goddess of the East. This fabulous machinery, which the genius of Claudian had used and abused, is the constant and miserable resource of the muse of Sidonius.

[s] The original authors of the reigns of Marcian, Leo, and Zeno, are reduced to some imperfect fragments, whose deficiencies must be supplied from the more recent compilations of Theophanes, Zenaras, and Cedrenus.

[t] St Pulcheria died A. D. 453, four years before her nominal husband; and her festival is celebrated on the 10th of September by the modern Greeks: she bequeathed an immense patrimony to pious, or at least to ecclesiastical, uses. See Tillemont, Memoires Eccles. tom. xv, p. 181, 184.

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to the prosperity of his own dominions, Marcian seemed to behold, with indifference, the misfortunes of Rome; and the obstinate refusal of a brave and active prince to draw his sword against the Vandals, was ascribed to a secret promise, which had formerly been exacted from him when he was a captive in the power of Genseric.[w] The death of Marcian, after a reign of seven years, would have exposed the East to the danger of a popular election; if the superior weight of a single family had not been able to incline the balance in favour of the candidate whose interest they supported. The patrician Aspar might have placed the diadem on his own head, if he would have subscribed the Nicene creed.[x] During three generations, the armies of the East were successively commanded by his father, by himself, and by his son Ardaburius: his barbarian guards formed a military force that overawed the palace and the capital; and the liberal distribution of his immense treasures, rendered Aspar as popular, as he was powerful. He recommended the obscure name of Leo of Thrace, a military tribune, and the principal steward of his household. His nomination was unanimously ratified by the senate; and the servant of Aspar received the imperial crown from the hands of the patriarch or bishop, who was permitted to express, by this unusual ceremony, the suff-

[w] See Procopius de Bell. Vandal. l. i, c. 4, p. 185.

[x] From this disability of Aspar to ascend the throne, it may be inferred that the stain of *heresy* was perpetual and indelible, while that of *barbarism* disappeared in the second generation.

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rage of the Deity.[y] This emperor, the first of the name of Leo, has been distinguished by the title of the *Great*; from a succession of princes, who gradually fixed, in the opinion of the Greeks, a very humble standard of heroic, or at least of royal, perfection. Yet the temperate firmness with which Leo resisted the oppression of his benefactor, shewed that he was conscious of his duty and of his prerogative. Aspar was astonished to find that his influence could no longer appoint a prefect of Constantinople: he presumed to reproach his sovereign with a breach of promise; and, insolently shaking his purple,—"It is not proper (said he,) that the man who is "invested with this garment, should be guilty "of lying." "Nor is it proper (replied Leo), "that a prince should be compelled to resign "his own judgment, and the public interest, to "the will of a subject."[z] After this extraordinary scene, it was impossible that the reconciliation of the emperor and the patrician could be sincere; or, at least, that it could be solid and permanent. An army of Isaurians[a] was secretly levied and introduced into Constantinople; and

[y] Theophanes, p. 95. This appears to be the first origin of a ceremony, which all the christian princes of the world have since adopted; and from which the clergy have deduced the most formidable consequences.

[z] Cedrenus (p. 345, 346), who was conversant with the writers of better days, has preserved the remarkable words of Aspar, Βασιλευ τον αυτην αλυργιδα περιβεβλημενον ου χρη διαψευδεσθαι

[a] The power of the Isaurians agitated the eastern empire in the two succeeding reigns of Zeno and Anastasius; but it ended in the destruction of those barbarians, who maintained their fierce independence about two hundred and thirty years.

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while Leo undermined the authority, and prepared the disgrace, of the family of Aspar, his mild and cautious behaviour restrained them from any rash and desperate attempts, which might have been fatal to themselves, or their enemies. The measures of peace and war were affected by this internal revolution. As long as Aspar degraded the majesty of the throne, the secret correspondence of religion and interest engaged him to favour the cause of Genseric. When Leo had delivered himself from that ignominious servitude, he listened to the complaints of the Italians; resolved to extirpate the tyranny of the Vandals; and declared his alliance with his colleague, Anthemius, whom he solemnly invested with the diadem and purple of the West.

Anthemius, emperor of the West, A. D. 467-472.

The virtues of Anthemius have perhaps been magnified, since the imperial descent, which he could only deduce from the usurper Procopius, has been swelled into a line of emperors.[b] But the merit of his immediate parents, their honours, and their riches, rendered Anthemius one of the most illustrious subjects of the East. His father Procopius obtained, after his Persian embassy, the rank of general and patrician; and the name of Anthemius was derived from his maternal

[b] ——— Tali tu civis ab urbe
Procopio genitore micas; cui prisca propago
Augustis venit a *proavis*.
The poet (Sidon. Panegyr. Anthem. 67-306) then proceeds to relate the private life and fortunes of the future emperor, with which he must have been very imperfectly acquainted.

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grandfather; the celebrated prefect, who protected, with so much ability and success, the infant reign of Theodosius. The grandson of the prefect was raised above the condition of a private subject, by his marriage with Euphemia, the daughter of the emperor Marcian. This splendid alliance, which might supersede the necessity of merit, hastened the promotion of Anthemius to the successive dignities of count, of master-general, of consul, and of patrician; and his merit or fortune claimed the honours of a victory, which was obtained on the banks of the Danube, over the Huns. Without indulging an extravagant ambition, the son-in-law of Marcian might hope to be his successor; but Anthemius supported the disappointment with courage and patience; and his subsequent elevation was universally approved by the public, who esteemed him worthy to reign till he ascended the throne.[c] The emperor of the West marched from Constantinople, attended by several counts of high distinction, and a body of guards, almost equal to the strength and numbers of a regular army: he entered Rome in triumph, and the choice of Leo was confirmed by the senate, the people, and the barbarian confederates of Italy.[d] The solemn inauguration of Anthemius was follow-

A. D 467, April 12.

[c] Sidonius discovers, with tolerable ingenuity, that this disappointment added new lustre to the virtues of Anthemius (210, &c.), who declined one sceptre, and reluctantly accepted another (22, &c.).

[d] The poet again celebrates the unanimity of all orders of the state (15-22): and the Chronicle of Idatius mentions the forces which attended his march.

ed by the nuptials of his daughter and the patrician Ricimer; a fortunate event, which was considered as the firmest security of the union and happiness of the state. The wealth of two empires was ostentatiously displayed: and many senators completed their ruin by an expensive effort to disguise their poverty. All serious business was suspended during this festival; the courts of justice were shut; the streets of Rome, the theatres, the places of public and private resort, resounded with hymeneal songs and dances; and the royal bride, clothed in silken robes, with a crown on her head, was conducted to the palace of Ricimer, who had changed his military dress for the habit of a consul and a senator. On this memorable occasion, Sidonius, whose early ambition had been so fatally blasted, appeared as the orator of Auvergne, among the provincial deputies who addressed the throne with congratulations or complaints.[e] The calends of January were now approaching, and the venal poet, who had loved Avitus, and esteemed Majorian, was persuaded, by his friends, to celebrate, in heroic verse, the merit, the felicity, the second consulship, and the future triumphs, of the emperor Anthemius. Sidonius pronounced, with assurance and success, a panegyric which is still extant; and whatever might be the imperfections, either of the subject or of

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A. D. 468, January 1.

[e] Interveni autem nuptiis patricii Ricimeris, cui filia perennis Augusti in spem publicæ securitatis copulabatur. The journey of Sidonius from Lyons, and the festival of Rome, are described with some spirit. L. i, epist. 5, p. 9–13; epist. 9, p. 21.

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the composition, the welcome flatterer was immediately rewarded with the prefecture of Rome; a dignity which placed him among the most illustrious personages of the empire, till he wisely preferred the more respectable character of a bishop and a saint.[f]

The festival of the Lupercalia.

The Greeks ambitiously commend the piety and catholic faith of the emperor whom they gave to the West; nor do they forget to observe, that when he left Constantinople, he converted his palace into the pious foundation of a public bath, a church, and an hospital for old men.[g] Yet some suspicious appearances are found to sully the theological fame of Anthemius. From the conversation of Philotheus, a Macedonian sectary, he had imbibed the spirit of religious toleration; and the heretics of Rome would have assembled with impunity, if the bold and vehement censure which Pope Hilary pronounced in the church of St Peter, had not obliged him to abjure the unpopular indulgence.[h] Even the pagans, a feeble and obscure remnant, conceived some vain hopes

[f] Sidonius (l. i, epist. 9, p. 23, 24) very fairly states his motive, his labour, and his reward. "Hic ipse Panegyricus, si non judicium, "certe eventum, boni operis, accepit." He was made bishop of Clermont, A. D. 471. Tillemont, Mem. Eccles. tom. xvi, p. 750.

[g] The palace of Anthemius stood on the banks of the Propontis. In the ninth century, Alexius, the son-in-law of the emperor Theophilus, obtained permission to purchase the ground; and ended his days in a monastery which he founded on that delightful spot. Ducange, Constantinopolis Christiana, p. 117, 152.

[h] Papa Hilaris . . . apud beatum Petrum Apostolum, palam ne id fieret clara voce constrinxit, in tantum ut non ea facienda cum interpositione juramenti idem promitteret Imperator. Gelasius

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from the indifference, or partiality, of Anthemius; and his singular friendship for the philosopher Severus, whom he promoted to the consulship, was ascribed to a secret project of reviving the ancient worship of the gods.[i] These idols were crumbled into dust: and the mythology which had once been the creed of nations, was so universally disbelieved, that it might be employed without scandal, or at least without suspicion, by christian poets.[k] Yet the vestiges of superstition were not absolutely obliterated, and the festival of the Lupercalia, whose origin had preceded the foundation of Rome, was still celebrated under the reign of Anthemius. The savage and simple rites were expressive of an early state of society before the invention of arts and agriculture. The rustic deities who presided over the toils and pleasures of the pastoral life, Pan, Faunus, and their train of satyrs, were such as the fancy of shepherds might create, sportive, petulant, and lascivious; whose power was limited, and whose malice was inoffensive.

Epistol. ad Adronicum, apud Baron. A. D. 467, N°. 3. The cardinal observes, with some complacency, that it was much easier to plant heresies at Constantinople, than at Rome.

[i] Damascius, in the life of the philosopher Isidore, apud Photium, p. 1049. Damascius, who lived under Justinian, composed another work, consisting of 570 preternatural stories of souls, demons, apparitions, the dotage of Platonic paganism.

[k] In the poetical works of Sidonius, which he afterwards condemned (l. ix, epist. 16, p. 285), the fabulous deities are the principal actors. If Jerom was scourged by the angels for only reading Virgil, the bishop of Clermont, for such a vile imitation, deserved an additional whipping from the Muses.

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A goat was the offering the best adapted to their character and attributes; the flesh of the victim was roasted on willow spits; and the riotous youths, who crowded to the feast, ran naked about the fields, with leather thongs in their hands, communicating, as it was supposed, the blessing of fecundity to the women whom they touched.[1] The altar of Pan was erected, perhaps by Evander the Arcadian, in a dark recess in the side of the Palatine hill, watered by a perpetual fountain, and shaded by an hanging grove. A tradition, that, in the same place, Romulus and Remus were suckled by the wolf, rendered it still more sacred and venerable in the eyes of the Romans; and this sylvan spot was gradually surrounded by the stately edifices of the Forum.[m] After the conversion of the imperial city, the Christians still continued, in the month of February, the annual celebration of the Lupercalia; to which they ascribed a secret and mysterious influence on the genial powers of the animal and vegetable world. The bishops of Rome were solicitous to abolish a profane custom, so repugnant to the spirit of Christianity; but their zeal was not supported by the authority of the civil magistrate: the inveterate abuse

[1] Ovid (Fast. l. ii, 267-452) has given an amusing description of the follies of antiquity, which still inspired so much respect, that a grave magistrate, running naked through the streets, was not an object of astonishment or laughter.

[m] See Dionys. Halicarn. l. i, p. 25, 65, edit. Hudson. The Roman Antiquaries, Donatus (l. ii, c. 18, p. 173, 174), and Nardini (p. 386, 387), have laboured to ascertain the true situation of the Lupercal.

subsisted till the end of the fifth century, and Pope Gelasius, who purified the capital from the last stain of idolatry, appeased, by a formal apology, the murmurs of the senate and people.[n] CHAP. XXXVI.

In all his public declarations, the emperor Leo assumes the authority, and professes the affection, of a father, for his son Anthemius, with whom he had divided the administration of the universe.[o] The situation, and perhaps the character, of Leo, dissuaded him from exposing his person to the toils and dangers of an African war. But the powers of the eastern empire were strenuously exerted to deliver Italy and the Mediterranean from the Vandals; and Genseric, who had so long oppressed both the land and sea, was threatened from every side with a formidable invasion. The campaign was opened by a bold and successful enterprise of the prefect Heraclius.[p] The troops of Egypt, Thebais, and

Preparations against the Vandals of Africa. A. D. 468.

[n] Baronius published, from the MSS. of this Vatican, this epistle of Pope Gelasius (A. D. 496, N° 28-45), which is entitled Adversus Andromachum Senatorem, cæterosque Romanos, qui Lupercalia secundum morem pristinum colenda constituebant. Gelasius always supposes that his adversaries are nominal Christians; and that he may not yield to them in absurd prejudice, he imputes to this harmless festival, all the *calamities* of the age.

[o] Itaque nos quibus totius mundi regimen commisit superna provisio .... Pius et triumphator semper Augustus filius noster Anthemius, licet Divina Majestas et nostra creatio pietati ejus plenam Imperii commiserit potestatem, &c. ... Such is the dignified style of Leo, whom Anthemius respectfully names, Dominus et Pater meus Princeps sacratissimus Leo. See Novell. Anthem. tit. ii, iii, p. 38, ad calcem. Cod. Theod.

[p] The expedition of Heraclius is clouded with difficulties (Tillemont, Hist. des Empereurs, tom. vi, p. 640), and it requires some dexterity to use the circumstances afforded by Theophanes, without injury to the more respectable evidence of Procopius.

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Libya, were embarked under his command; and the Arabs, with a train of horses and camels, opened the roads of the desert. Heraclius landed on the coast of Tripoli, surprised and subdued the cities of that province, and prepared, by a laborious march, which Cato had formerly executed,[9] to join the imperial army under the walls of Carthage. The intelligence of this loss extorted from Genseric some insidious and ineffectual propositions of peace; but he was still more seriously alarmed by the reconciliation of Marcellinus with the two empires. The independent patrician had been persuaded to acknowledge the legitimate title of Anthemius, whom he accompanied in his journey to Rome; the Dalmatian fleet was received into the harbours of Italy; the active valour of Marcellinus expelled the Vandals from the island of Sardinia; and the languid efforts of the West added some weight to the immense preparations of the eastern Romans. The expence of the naval armament which Leo sent against the Vandals, has been distinctly ascertained; and the curious and instructive account displays the wealth of the declining empire. The royal demesnes, or private patrimony, of the prince, supplied seventeen thousand pounds of

[9] The march of Cato from Berenice, in the province of Cyrene, was much longer than that of Heraclius from Tripoli. He passed the deep sandy desart in thirty days, and it was found necessary to provide, besides the ordinary supplies, a great number of skins filled with water, and several *Psylli*, who were supposed to possess the art of sucking the wounds which had been made by the serpents of their native country. See Plutarch in Caton. Uticens. tom. iv, p. 275. Strabon. Geograph. l. xvii, p. 1193.

gold; forty-seven thousand pounds of gold, and seven hundred thousand of silver, were levied and paid into the treasury by the prætorian prefects. But the cities were reduced to extreme poverty; and the diligent calculation of fines and forfeitures, as a valuable object of the revenue, does not suggest the idea of a just, or merciful, administration. The whole expence, by whatsoever means it was defrayed, of the African campaign, amounted to the sum of one hundred and thirty thousand pounds of gold, about five millions two hundred thousand pounds sterling, at a time when the value of money appears, from the comparative price of corn, to have been somewhat higher than in the present age.[s] The fleet that sailed from Constantinople to Carthage, consisted of eleven hundred and thirteen ships, and the number of soldiers and mariners exceeded one hundred thousand men. Basiliscus, the brother of the empress Vorina, was entrusted with this important command. His sister, the wife of Leo, had exaggerated the merit of his former exploits against the Scythians. But the discovery of his guilt, or incapacity, was reserved for the African war; and his friends could only save his military reputation, by asserting, that he had conspired with Aspar to

[s] The principal sum is clearly expressed by Procopius (de Bell. Vandal. l. i, c. 6, p. 191); the smaller constituent parts, which Tillemont (Hist. des Empereurs, tom. vi, p. 396) has laboriously collected from the Byzantine writers, are less certain, and less important. The historian Malchus laments the public misery (Excerpt. ex Suida in Corp. Hist. Byzant. p. 58); but he is surely unjust when he charges Leo with hoarding the treasures which he extorted from the people.

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spare Genseric, and to betray the last hope of the western empire.

Failure of the expedition.

Experience has shewn, that the success of an invader most commonly depends on the vigour and celerity of his operations. The strength and sharpness of the first impression are blunted by delay; the health and spirit of the troops insensibly languish in a distant climate; the naval and military force, a mighty effort which perhaps can never be repeated, is silently consumed; and every hour that is wasted in negotiation, accustoms the enemy to contemplate and examine those hostile terrors, which, on their first appearance, he deemed irresistible. The formidable navy of Basiliscus pursued its prosperous navigation from the Thracian Bosphorus to the coast of Africa. He landed his troops at Cape Bona, or the promontory of Mercury, about forty miles from Carthage.[s] The army of Heraclius, and the fleet of Marcellinus, either joined or seconded the imperial lieutenant; and the Vandals, who opposed his progress by sea or land, were successively vanquished.[t] If Basiliscus had seized the moment of consternation, and boldly advanced to the capital, Carthage must have surrendered, and the

[s] This promontory is forty miles from Carthage (Procop. l. i, c. 6, p. 192), and twenty leagues from Sicily (Shaw's Travels, p. 89). Scipio landed further in the bay, at the fair promontory; see the animated description of Livy, xxix, 26, 27.

[t] Theophanes (p. 100) affirms that many ships of the Vandals were sunk. The assertion of Jornandes (de Successione Regn.), that Basiliscus attacked Carthage, must be understood in a very qualified sense.

kingdom of the Vandals was extinguished. Genseric beheld the danger with firmness, and eluded it with his veteran dexterity. He protested, in the most respectful language, that he was ready to submit his person, and his dominions, to the will of the emperor; but he requested a truce of five days to regulate the terms of his submission; and it was universally believed, that his secret liberality contributed to the success of this public negotiation. Instead of obstinately refusing whatever indulgence his enemy so earnestly solicited, the guilty, or the credulous, Basiliscus consented to the fatal truce; and his imprudent security seemed to proclaim, that he already considered himself as the conqueror of Africa. During this short interval, the wind became favourable to the designs of Genseric. He manned his largest ships of war, with the bravest of the Moors and Vandals; and they towed after them many large barks, filled with combustible materials. In the obscurity of the night, these destructive vessels were impelled against the unguarded and unsuspecting fleet of the Romans, who were awakened by the sense of their instant danger. Their close and crowded order assisted the progress of the fire, which was communicated with rapid and irresistible violence; and the noise of the wind, the crackling of the flames, the dissonant cries of the soldiers and mariners, who could neither command, nor obey, increased the horror of the nocturnal tumult. Whilst they laboured to extricate themselves from the fire-ships, and to save at least a part of the

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navy, the galleys of Genseric assaulted them with temperate and disciplined valour; and many of the Romans, who escaped the fury of the flames, were destroyed or taken by the victorious Vandals. Among the events of that disastrous night, the heroic, or rather desperate, courage of John, one of the principal officers of Basiliscus, has rescued his name from oblivion. When the ship, which he had bravely defended, was almost consumed, he threw himself in his armour into the sea, disdainfully rejected the esteem and pity of Genso, the son of Genseric, who pressed him to accept honourable quarter, and sunk under the waves; exclaiming, with his last breath, that he would never fall alive into the hands of those impious dogs. Actuated by a far different spirit, Basiliscus, whose station was the most remote from danger, disgracefully fled in the beginning of the engagement, returned to Constantinople with the loss of more than half of his fleet and army, and sheltered his guilty head in the sanctuary of St Sophia, till his sister, by her tears and entreaties, could obtain his pardon from the indignant emperor. Heraclius effected his retreat through the desert; Marcellinus retired to Sicily, where he was assassinated, perhaps at the instigation of Ricimer, by one of his own captains; and the king of the Vandals expressed his surprise and satisfaction, that the Romans themselves should remove from the world his most formidable antagonists.[u] After

[u] Damascius in Vit. Isidor. apud Phot. p. 1048. It will appear, by comparing the three short chronicles of the times, that Marcellinus had fought near Carthage, and was killed in Sicily.

the failure of this great expedition, Genseric again became the tyrant of the sea: the coasts of Italy, Greece, and Asia, were again exposed to his revenge and avarice; Tripoli and Sardinia returned to his obedience; he added Sicily to the number of his provinces; and, before he died, in the fulness of years and of glory, he beheld the final extinction of the empire of the West.[x] CHAP. XXXVI. A. D. 477.

Conquests of the Visigoths in Spain and Gaul, A. D. 462-472.

During his long and active reign, the African monarch had studiously cultivated the friendship of the barbarians of Europe, whose arms he might employ in a seasonable and effectual diversion against the two empires. After the death of Attila, he renewed his alliance with the Visigoths of Gaul; and the sons of the elder Theodoric, who successively reigned over that warlike nation, were easily persuaded, by the sense of interest, to forget the cruel affront which Genseric had inflicted on their sister.[y] The death of the emperor Majorian delivered Theodoric II. from the restraint of fear, and perhaps of honour; he violated his recent treaty with the Romans; and the ample territory of Narbonne, which he firmly united to

[x] For the African war, see Procopius (de Bell. Vandal. l. i, c. 6, p. 191, 192, 193;) Theophanes (p. 99, 100, 101;) Cedrenus (p. 349, 350,) and Zonaras (tom. ii. l. xiv, p. 50, 51.) Montesquieu (Considerations sur la Grandeur, &c. c. xx, tom. iii, p. 407) has made a judicious observation on the failure of these great naval armaments.

[y] Jornandes is our best guide through the reigns of Theodoric II. and Euric (de Rebus Geticis, c. 44, 45, 46, 47, p. 675-681.) Idatius ends too soon, and Isidore is too sparing of the information which he might have given on the affairs of Spain. The events that relate to Gaul are laboriously illustrated in the third book of the Abbe Dubos, Hist. Critique, tom. i, p. 424-620.

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his dominions, became the immediate reward of his perfidy. The selfish policy of Ricimer encouraged him to invade the provinces which were in the possession of Ægidius, his rival; but the active count, by the defence of Arles, and the victory of Orleans, saved Gaul, and checked, during his lifetime, the progress of the Visigoths. Their ambition was soon rekindled; and the design of extinguishing the Roman empire in Spain and Gaul, was conceived, and almost completed, in the reign of Euric, who assassinated his brother Theodoric, and displayed, with a more savage temper, superior abilities, both in peace and war. He passed the Pyrenees at the head of a numerous army, subdued the cities of Saragossa and Pampeluna, vanquished in battle the martial nobles of the Taragonese province, carried his victorious arms into the heart of Lusitania, and permitted the Suevi to hold the kingdom of Gallicia under the Gothic monarchy of Spain.[z] The efforts of Euric were not less vigorous, or less successful, in Gaul; and throughout the country that extends from the Pyrenees to the Rhône and the Loire, Berry, and Auvergne, were the only cities, or dioceses, which refused to acknowledge him as their master.[a] In the defence of Clermont, their principal town, the inhabitants of Auvergne sustained, with inflexible resolution,

[z] See Mariana, Hist. Hispan. tom. i, l. v, c. 5, p. 162.

[a] An imperfect, but original, picture of Gaul, more especially of Auvergne, is shown by Sidonius; who, as a senator, and afterwards as a bishop, was deeply interested in the fate of his country. See l. v, epist. 1, 5, 9, &c.

the miseries of war, pestilence, and famine; and the Visigoths, relinquishing the fruitless siege, suspended the hopes of that important conquest. The youth of the province were animated by the heroic, and almost incredible, valour of Ecdicius, the son of the emperor Avitus,[b] who made a desperate sally with only eighteen horsemen, boldly attacked the Gothic army, and, after maintaining a flying skirmish, retired safe and victorious within the walls of Clermont. His charity was equal to his courage: in a time of extreme scarcity, four thousand poor were fed at his expence; and his private influence levied an army of Burgundians for the deliverance of Auvergne. From *his* virtues alone the faithful citizens of Gaul derived any hopes of safety or freedom; and even such virtues were insufficient to avert the impending ruin of their country, since they were anxious to learn from his authority and example, whether they should prefer the alternative of exile, or servitude.[c] The public confidence was lost; the resources of the state were exhausted; and the Gauls had too much reason to believe, that Anthemius, who reigned in Italy, was incapable of protecting his distressed subjects beyond the Alps. The feeble emperor could only procure for their

[b] Sidonius, l. iii, epist. 3, p. 65-68. Greg. Turon. l. ii, c. 24, in tom. ii, p. 174. Jornandes, c. 45, p. 675. Perhaps Ecdicius was only the son-in-law of Avitus, his wife's son by another husband.

[c] Si nullæ a republicâ vires, nulla præsidia, si nullæ, quantum rumor est, Anthemii principis opes, statuit, te auctore, nobilitas seu patriam dimittere seu capillos (Sidon. l. ii, epist. 1, p. 33). The last words (Sirmond Not. p. 25) may likewise denote the clerical tonsure, which was indeed the choice of Sidonius himself.

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defence the service of twelve thousand British auxiliaries. Riothamus, one of the independent kings, or chieftains, of the island, was persuaded to transport his troops to the continent of Gaul; he sailed up the Loire, and established his quarters in Berry, where the people complained of these oppressive allies, till they were destroyed, or dispersed, by the arms of the Visigoths.[d]

Trial of Arvandus, A. D. 468.

One of the last acts of jurisdiction, which the Roman senate exercised over their subjects of Gaul, was the trial and condemnation of Arvandus, the prætorian prefect. Sidonius, who rejoices that he lived under a reign in which he might pity and assist a state-criminal, has expressed, with tenderness and freedom, the faults of his indiscreet and unfortunate friend.[e] From the perils, which he had escaped, Arvandus imbibed confidence rather than wisdom; and such was the various, though uniform, imprudence of his behaviour, that his prosperity must appear much more surprising than his downfal. The second prefecture, which he obtained within the term of five years, abolished the merit and popularity of his preceding administration. His easy

[d] The history of these Britons may be traced in Jornandes (c. 45, p. 678); Sidonius (l. iii, epistol. 9, p. 73, 74), and Gregory of Tours (l. ii, c. 18, in tom. ii, p. 170). Sidonius (who styles these mercenary troops argutos, armatos, tumultuosos, virtute, numero, contubernio, contumaces) addresses their general in a tone of friendship and familiarity.

[e] See Sidonius, l. i, epist, 7, p. 15–20, with Sirmond's notes. This letter does honour to his heart, as well as to his understanding. The prose of Sidonius, however vitiated by a false and affected taste, is much superior to his insipid verses.

temper was corrupted by flattery, and exasperated by opposition; he was forced to satisfy his importunate creditors with the spoils of the province; his capricious insolence offended the nobles of Gaul, and he sunk under the weight of the public hatred. The mandate of his disgrace summoned him to justify his conduct before the senate; and he passed the sea of Tuscany with a favourable wind, the presage, as he vainly imagined, of his future fortunes. A decent respect was still observed for the *prefectorian* rank; and on his arrival at Rome, Arvandus was committed to the hospitality, rather than to the custody, of Flavius Asellus, the count of the sacred largesses, who resided in the Capitol.[r] He was eagerly pursued by his accusers, the four deputies of Gaul, who were all distinguished by their birth, their dignities, or their eloquence. In the name of a great province, and according to the forms of Roman jurisprudence, they instituted a civil and criminal action, requiring such a restitution as might compensate the losses of individuals, and such punishment as might satisfy the justice of the state. Their charges of corrupt oppression were numerous and weighty; but they placed their secret dependence on a letter, which they had intercepted, and which they could prove, by the evidence of his secretary, to

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[r] When the Capitol ceased to be a temple, it was appropriated to the use of the civil magistrate; and it is still the residence of the Roman senator. The jewellers, &c. might be allowed to expose their precious wares in the porticoes.

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have been dictated by Arvandus himself. The author of this letter seemed to dissuade the king of the Goths from a peace with the *Greek* emperor; he suggested the attack of the Britons on the Loire; and he recommended a division of Gaul, according to the law of nations, between the Visigoths and the Burgundians.[5] These pernicious schemes, which a friend could only palliate by the reproaches of vanity and indiscretion, were susceptible of a treasonable interpretation: and the deputies had artfully resolved, not to produce their most formidable weapons till the decisive moment of the contest. But their intentions were discovered by the zeal of Sidonius. He immediately apprized the unsuspecting criminal of his danger; and sincerely lamented, without any mixture of anger, the haughty presumption of Arvandus, who rejected, and even resented, the salutary advice of his friends. Ignorant of his real situation, Arvandus shewed himself in the Capitol in the white robe of a candidate, accepted indiscriminate salutations and offers of service, examined the shops of the merchants, the silks and gems, sometimes with the indifference of a spectator, and sometimes with the attention of a purchaser: and complained of the times, of the senate, of the prince, and of the delays of justice. His complaints were soon

[5] Hæc ad regem Gothorum, charta videbatur emitti, pacem cum Græco Imperatore dissuadens, Britannos super Ligerim sitos impugnari opportere demonstrans, cum Burgundionibus jure gentium Gallias dividi debere confirmans.

removed. An early day was fixed for his trial; and Arvandus appeared, with his accusers, before a numerous assembly of the Roman senate. The mournful garb which they affected, excited the compassion of the judges, who were scandalized by the gay and splendid dress of their adversary; and when the prefect Arvandus, with the first of the Gallic deputies, were directed to take their places on the senatorial benches, the same contrast of pride and modesty was observed in their behaviour. In this memorable judgment, which presented a lively image of the old republic, the Gauls exposed, with force and freedom, the grievances of the province; and as soon as the minds of the audience were sufficiently inflamed, they recited the fatal epistle. The obstinacy of Arvandus was founded on the strange supposition, that a subject could not be convicted of treason, unless he had actually conspired to assume the purple. As the paper was read, he repeatedly, and with a loud voice, acknowledged it for his genuine composition; and his astonishment was equal to his dismay, when the unanimous voice of the senate declared him guilty of a capital offence. By their decree, he was degraded from the rank of a prefect to the obscure condition of a plebeian, and ignominiously dragged by servile hands to the public prison. After a fortnight's adjournment, the senate was again convened to pronounce the sentence of his death: but while he expected, in the island of Æsculapius, the expiration of

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the thirty days allowed by an ancient law to the vilest malefactors,[h] his friends interposed, the emperor Anthemius relented, and the prefect of Gaul obtained the milder punishment of exile and confiscation. The faults of Arvandus might deserve compassion; but the impunity of Seronatus accused the justice of the republic, till he was condemned, and executed, on the complaint of the people of Auvergne. That flagitious minister, the Catiline of his age and country, held a secret correspondence with the Visigoths, to betray the province which he oppressed; his industry was continually exercised in the discovery of new taxes and obsolete offences; and his extravagant vices would have inspired contempt, if they had not excited fear and abhorrence.[i]

Discord of Anthemius and Ricimer, A. D. 471.

Such criminals were not beyond the reach of justice; but whatever might be the guilt of Ricimer, that powerful barbarian was able to contend or to negotiate with the prince, whose alliance he had condescended to accept. The peaceful and prosperous reign which Anthemius had promised to the West, was soon clouded by misfortune and discord. Ricimer, apprehensive, or impatient, of a superior, retired from Rome,

[h] *Senatusconsultum Tiberianum* (Sirmond, Not. p. 17); but that law allowed only ten days between the sentence and execution; the remaining twenty were added in the reign of Theodosius.

[i] Catilina seculi nostri. Sidonius, l. ii, epist. 1, p. 38; l. v, epist. 13, p. 143; l. vii, epist. 7, p. 185. He execrates the crimes, and applauds the punishment, of Seronatus, perhaps with the indignation of a virtuous citizen, perhaps with the resentment of a personal enemy.

and fixed his residence at Milan; an advantageous situation, either to invite, or to repel, the warlike tribes that were seated between the Alps and the Danube.[k] Italy was gradually divided into two independent and hostile kingdoms; and the nobles of Liguria, who trembled at the near approach of a civil war, fell prostrate at the feet of the patrician, and conjured him to spare their unhappy country. "For my own part," replied Ricimer, in a tone of insolent moderation, "I am still inclined to embrace the friendship "of the Galatian;[l] but who will undertake to "appease his anger, or to mitigate the pride, "which always rises in proportion to our sub-"mission?" They informed him, that Epiphanius, bishop of Pavia,[m] united the wisdom of the serpent with the innocence of the dove; and appeared confident, that the eloquence of such an ambassador must prevail against the strongest opposition, either of interest or passion.

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[k] Ricimer, under the reign of Anthemius, defeated and slew in battle Beorgor, king of the Alani (Jornandes, c. 45, p. 678). His sister had married the king of the Burgundians, and he maintained an intimate connection with the Suevic colony established in Pannonia and Noricum.

[l] Galatam concitatum. Sirmond (in his notes to Ennodius) applies this appellation to Anthemius himself. The emperor was probably born in the province of Galatia, whose inhabitants, the Gallo-Grecians, were supposed to unite the vices of a savage, and a corrupted, people.

[m] Epiphanius was thirty years bishop of Pavia (A. D. 467–497; see Tillemont, Mem. Eccles. tom. xvi, p. 788). His name and actions would have been unknown to posterity, if Ennodius, one of his successors, had not written his life (Sirmond, Opera, tom. i, p. 1647-692); in which he represents him as one of the greatest characters of the age.

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Their recommendation was approved; and Epiphanius, assuming the benevolent office of mediation, proceeded without delay to Rome, where he was received with the honours due to his merit and reputation. The oration of a bishop in favour of peace, may be easily supposed; he argued, that in all possible circumstances, the forgiveness of injuries must be an act of mercy, or magnanimity, or prudence; and he seriously admonished the emperor to avoid a contest with a fierce barbarian, which might be fatal to himself, and must be ruinous to his dominions. Anthemius acknowledged the truth of his maxims; but he deeply felt, with grief and indignation, the behaviour of Ricimer; and his passion gave eloquence and energy to his discourse. "What "favours," he warmly exclaimed, "have we "refused to this ungrateful man? What provo- "cations have we not endured? Regardless of "the majesty of the purple, I gave my daughter "to a Goth; I sacrificed my own blood to the "safety of the republic. The liberality which "ought to have secured the eternal attachment "of Ricimer has exasperated him against his "benefactor. What wars has he not excited "against the empire? How often has he insti- "gated, and assisted the fury of hostile nations? "Shall I now accept his perfidious friendship? "Can I hope that *he* will respect the engage- "ments of a treaty, who has already violated "the duties of a son?" But the anger of Anthemius evaporated in these passionate exclamations; he insensibly yielded to the proposals of Epipha-

nius; and the bishop returned to his diocese with the satisfaction of restoring the peace of Italy, by a reconciliation,* of which the sincerity and continuance might be reasonably suspected. The clemency of the emperor was extorted from his weakness; and Ricimer suspended his ambitious designs, till he had secretly prepared the engines with which he resolved to subvert the throne of Anthemius. The mask of peace and moderation was then thrown aside. The army of Ricimer was fortified by a numerous reinforcement of Burgundians and oriental Suevi: he disclaimed all allegiance to the Greek emperor, marched from Milan to the gates of Rome, and fixing his camp on the banks of the Anio, impatiently expected the arrival of Olybrius, his imperial candidate. CHAP. XXXVI.

Olybrius emperor of the West, A. D. 472. March 23.

The senator Olybrius, of the Anician family, might esteem himself the lawful heir of the western empire. He had married Placidia, the younger daughter of Valentinian, after she was restored by Genseric; who still detained her sister Eudoxia, as the wife, or rather as the captive, of his son. The king of the Vandals supported, by threats and solicitations, the fair pretensions of his Roman ally; and assigned, as one of the motives of the war, the refusal of the senate and people to acknowledge their lawful prince, and the unworthy preference which they had given

* Ennodius (p. 1659-1664) has related this embassy of Epiphanius; and his narrative, verbose and turgid as it must appear, illustrates some curious passages in the fall of the western empire.

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to a stranger.[o] The friendship of the public enemy might render Olybrius still more unpopular to the Italians; but when Ricimer meditated the ruin of the emperor Anthemius, he tempted, with the offer of a diadem, the candidate who could justify his rebellion by an illustrious name, and a royal alliance. The husband of Placidia, who, like most of his ancestors, had been invested with the consular dignity, might have continued to enjoy a secure and splendid fortune in the peaceful residence of Constantinople; nor does he appear to have been tormented by such a genius, as cannot be amused or occupied, unless by the administration of an empire. Yet Olybrius yielded to the importunities of his friends, perhaps of his wife; rashly plunged into the dangers and calamities of a civil war; and, with the secret connivance of the emperor Leo, accepted the Italian purple, which was bestowed and resumed, at the capricious will of a barbarian. He landed without obstacle (for Genseric was master of the sea) either at Ravenna or the port of Ostia, and immediately proceeded to the camp of Ricimer, where he was received as the sovereign of the western world.[p]

[o] Priscus Excerpt. Legation. p. 74. Procopius de Bell. Vandal. l. i, c. 6, p. 191. Eudoxia and her daughter were restored after the death of Majorian. Perhaps the consulship of Olybrius (A. D. 464) was bestowed as a nuptial present.

[p] The hostile appearance of Olybrius is fixed (notwithstanding the opinion of Pagi) by the duration of his reign. The secret connivance of Leo is acknowledged by Theophanes and the Paschal Chronicle. We are ignorant of his motives; but in this obscure period, our ignorance extends to the most public and important facts.

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Sack of Rome, and death of Anthemius, A. D. 472, July 11.

The patrician, who had extended his posts from the Anio to the Milvian bridge, already possessed two quarters of Rome, the Vatican and the Janiculum, which are separated by the Tiber from the rest of the city;[q] and it may be conjectured, that an assembly of seceding senators imitated, in the choice of Olybrius, the forms of a legal election. But the body of the senate and people firmly adhered to the cause of Anthemius; and the more effectual support of a Gothic army enabled him to prolong his reign, and the public distress, by a resistance of three months, which produced the concomitant evils of famine and pestilence. At length, Ricimer made a furious assault on the bridge of Hadrian, or St Angelo; and the narrow pass was defended with equal valour by the Goths, till the death of Gilimer their leader. The victorious troops, breaking down every barrier, rushed with irresistible violence into the heart of the city, and Rome (if we may use the language of a contemporary pope) was subverted by the civil fury of Anthemius and Ricimer.[r] The unfortunate An-

[q] Of the fourteen regions, or quarters, into which Rome was divided by Augustus, only *one*, the Janiculum, lay on the Tuscan side of the Tiber. But, in the fifth century, the Vatican suburb formed a considerable city; and in the ecclesiastical distribution, which had been recently made by Simplicius, the reigning pope, *two* of the *seven* regions, or parishes of Rome, depended on the church of St Peter. See Nardini Roma Antica, p. 67. It would require a tedious dissertation to mark the circumstances, in which I am inclined to depart from the topography of that learned Roman.

[r] Nuper Anthemii et Ricimeris civili furore subversa est. Gelasius in Epist. ad Andromach. apud Baron. A. D. 496. N°. 42. Si-

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themius was dragged from his concealment, and inhumanly massacred by the command of his son-in-law; who thus added a third, or perhaps a fourth, emperor to the number of his victims. The soldiers, who united the rage of factious citizens with the savage manners of barbarians, were indulged, without controul, in the license of rapine and murder: the crowd of slaves and plebeians, who were unconcerned in the event, could only gain by the indiscriminate pillage; and the face of the city exhibited the strange contrast of stern cruelty, and dissolute intemperance.[1] Forty days after this calamitous event, the subject, not of glory, but of guilt, Italy was delivered, by a painful disease, from the tyrant Ricimer, who bequeathed the command of his army to his nephew Gundobald, one of the princes of the Burgundians. In the same year, all the principal actors in this great revolution were removed from the stage; and the whole reign of Olybrius, whose death does not betray any symptoms of violence, is included within the term of seven months. He left one daughter, the offspring of his marriage with Placidia; and the family of the great Theodosius, transplanted from

Death of Ricimer, Aug. 20,

and of Olybrius, Oct. 23.

gonius (tom. i, l. xiv, de Occidentali Imperio, p. 542, 543), and Muratori (Annali d'Italia, tom. iv, p. 308, 309), with the aid of a less imperfect MS. of the Historia Miscella, have illustrated this dark and bloody transaction.

[1] Such had been the sæva ac deformis urbe totâ facies, when Rome was assaulted and stormed by the troops of Vespasian (see Tacit. Hist. iii, 82, 83); and every cause of mischief had since acquired much additional energy. The revolution of ages may bring round the same calamities; but ages may revolve, without producing a Tacitus to describe them.

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Spain to Constantinople, was propagated in the female line as far as the eighth generation.[t]

Julius Nepos and Glycerius, emperors of the West, A. D. 472-475.

Whilst the vacant throne of Italy was abandoned to lawless barbarians,[u] the election of a new colleague was seriously agitated in the council of Leo. The empress Verina, studious to promote the greatness of her own family, had married one of her nieces to Julius Nepos, who succeeded his uncle Marcellinus in the sovereignty of Dalmatia, a more solid possession than the title which he was persuaded to accept, of Emperor of the West. But the measures of the Byzantine court were so languid and irresolute, that many months elapsed after the death of Anthemius, and even of Olybrius, before their destined successor could shew himself, with a respectable force, to his Italian subjects. During that interval, Glycerius, an obscure soldier, was invested with the purple by his patron Gundobald; but the Burgundian prince was unable, or unwilling, to support his nomination by a civil war: the pursuits of domestic ambition recalled him beyond the Alps,[x] and his client was

[t] See Ducange, Familiæ Byzantin. p. 74, 75. Areobindus, who appears to have married the niece of the emperor Justinian, was the eighth descendant of the elder Theodosius.

[u] The last revolutions of the western empire are faintly marked in Theophanes (p. 102); Jornandes (c. 45, p. 679); the Chronicle of Marcellinus, and the fragments of an anonymous writer, published by Valesius at the end of Ammianus (p. 716, 717). If Photius had not been so wretchedly concise, we should derive much information from the contemporary histories of Malchus and Candidus. See his Extracts, p. 172-179.

[x] See Greg. Turon. l. ii, c. 28, in tom. ii, p. 175. Dubos, Hist. Critique, tom. i, p. 613. By the murder, or death, of his two brothers, Gundobald acquired the sole possession of the kingdom of Burgundy, whose ruin was hastened by their discord.

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permitted to exchange the Roman sceptre for the bishopric of Salona. After extinguishing such a competitor, the emperor Nepos was acknowledged by the senate, by the Italians, and by the provincials of Gaul; his moral virtues, and military talents, were loudly celebrated; and those who derived any private benefit from his government, announced, in prophetic strains, the restoration of the public felicity.[y] Their hopes (if such hopes had been entertained) were confounded within the term of a single year; and the treaty of peace, which ceded Auvergne to the Visigoths, is the only event of his short and inglorious reign. The most faithful subjects of Gaul were sacrificed by the Italian emperor, to the hope of domestic security;[z] but his repose was soon invaded by a furious sedition of the barbarian confederates, who, under the command of Orestes, their general, were in full march from Rome to Ravenna. Nepos trembled at their approach; and instead of placing a just confidence in the strength of Ravenna, he hastily escaped to his ships, and retired to his Dalmatian principality, on the opposite coast of the Hadriatic. By this shameful abdication, he protracted his life about five years, in a very

[y] Julius Nepos armis pariter summus Augustus ac moribus. Sidonius, l. v, ep. 16, p. 146. Nepos had given to Ecdicius the title of patrician, which Anthemius had promised, decessoris Anthemei fidem absolvit. See l. viii, ep. 7, p. 224.

[z] Epiphanius was sent ambassador from Nepos to the Visigoths, for the purpose of ascertaining the *fines Imperii Italici* (Ennodius in Sirmond. tom. i, p. 1665-1669). His pathetic discourse concealed the disgraceful secret, which soon excited the just and bitter complaints of the bishop of Clermont.

ambiguous state, between an emperor and an exile, till he was assassinated at Salona by the ungrateful Glycerius, who was translated, perhaps as the reward of his crime, to the archbishopric of Milan.[a] CHAP. XXXVI.

The nations who had asserted their independence after the death of Attila, were established, by the right of possession or conquest, in the boundless countries to the north of the Danube; or in the Roman provinces between the river and the Alps. But the bravest of their youth enlisted in the army of *confederates*, who formed the defence and the terror of Italy;[b] and in this promiscuous multitude, the names of the Heruli, the Scyrri, the Alani, the Turcilingi, and the Rugians, appear to have predominated. The example of these warriors was imitated by Orestes,[c] the son of Tatullus, and the father of the last Roman emperor of the West. Orestes, who has been already mentioned in this history, had never deserted his country. His birth and fortunes rendered him one of the most illustrious subjects of The patrician Orestes, A. D. 475.

[a] Malchus, apud Phot. p. 172. Ennod. Epigram. l. lxxxii, in Sirmond Oper. tom. i, p. 1879. Some doubt may however be raised on the identity of the emperor and the archbishop.

[b] Our knowledge of these mercenaries, who subverted the western empire, is derived from Procopius (de Bell. Gothico, l. i, c. i, p. 308.). The popular opinion, and the recent historians, represent Odoacer in the false light of a *stranger* and a *king*, who invaded Italy with an army of foreigners, his native subjects.

[c] Orestes, qui eo tempore quando Attila ad Italiam venit, se illi junxit, et ejus notarius factus fuerat. Anonym. Vales. p. 716. He is mistaken in the date; but we may credit his assertion, that the secretary of Attila was the father of Augustulus.

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Pannonia. When that province was ceded to the Huns, he entered into the service of Attila, his lawful sovereign, obtained the office of his secretary, and was repeatedly sent ambassador to Constantinople, to represent the person, and signify the commands, of the imperious monarch. The death of that conqueror restored him to his freedom, and Orestes might honourably refuse either to follow the sons of Attila, into the Scythian desert, or to obey the Ostrogoths, who had usurped the dominion of Pannonia. He preferred the service of the Italian princes, the successors of Valentinian; and, as he possessed the qualifications of courage, industry, and experience, he advanced with rapid steps in the military profession, till he was elevated, by the favour of Nepos himself, to the dignities of patrician, and master-general of the troops. These troops had been long accustomed to reverence the character and authority of Orestes, who affected their manners, conversed with them in their own language, and was intimately connected with their national chieftains, by long habits of familiarity and friendship. At his solicitation they rose in arms against the obscure Greek, who presumed to claim their obedience; and when Orestes, from some secret motive, declined the purple, they consented, with the same facility, to acknowledge his son Augustulus, as the emperor of the West. By the abdication of Nepos, Orestes had now attained the summit of his ambitious hopes; but he soon discovered, before the end of the first year, that the lessons of perjury and

His son Augustulus, the last emperor of the West, A. D. 476.

ingratitude, which a rebel must inculcate, will be retorted against himself; and that the precarious sovereign of Italy was only permitted to choose, whether he would be the slave, or the victim, of his barbarian mercenaries. The dangerous alliance of these strangers had oppressed and insulted the last remains of Roman freedom and dignity. At each revolution, their pay and privileges were augmented; but their insolence increased in a still more extravagant degree; they envied the fortune of their brethren in Gaul, Spain, and Africa, whose victorious arms had acquired an independent and perpetual inheritance; and they insisted on their peremptory demand, that a *third* part of the lands of Italy should be immediately divided among them. Orestes, with a spirit which, in another situation, might be entitled to our esteem, chose rather to encounter the rage of an armed multitude, than to subscribe the ruin of an innocent people. He rejected the audacious demand; and his refusal was favourable to the ambition of Odoacer; a bold barbarian, who assured his fellow soldiers, that, if they dared to associate under his command, they might soon extort the justice which had been denied to their dutiful petitions. From all the camps and garrisons of Italy, the confederates, actuated by the same resentment and the same hopes, impatiently flocked to the standard of this popular leader; and the unfortunate patrician, overwhelmed by the torrent, hastily retreated to the strong city of Pavia, the episcopal seat of the holy Epiphanites. Pavia was

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immediately besieged, the fortifications were stormed, the town was pillaged; and although the bishop might labour with much zeal and some success, to save the property of the church, and the chastity of female captives, the tumult could only be appeased by the execution of Orestes.[d] His brother Paul was slain in an action near Ravenna; and the helpless Augustulus, who could no longer command the respect, was reduced to implore the clemency, of Odoacer.

Odoacer, king of Italy, A. D. 476–490.

That successful barbarian was the son of Edecon; who, in some remarkable transactions, particularly described in a preceding chapter, had been the colleague of Orestes himself. The honour of an ambassador should be exempt from suspicion; and Edecon had listened to a conspiracy against the life of his sovereign. But this apparent guilt was expiated by his merit or repentance; his rank was eminent and conspicuous; he enjoyed the favour of Attila; and the troops under his command, who guarded, in their turn, the royal village, consisted in a tribe of Scyrri, his immediate and hereditary subjects. In the revolt of the nations, they still adhered to the Huns; and, more than twelve years afterwards, the name of Edecon is honourably mentioned, in their unequal contest with the Ostrogoths; which was terminated, after two bloody battles, by the defeat and

[d] See Ennodius (in Vit. Epiphan. Sirmond, tom. i, p. 669, 1670.). He adds weight to the narrative of Procopius, though we may doubt whether the devil actually contrived the siege of Pavia, to distress the bishop and his flock.

dispersion of the Scyrri.[e] Their gallant leader, who did not survive this national calamity, left two sons, Onulf and Odoacer, to struggle with adversity, and to maintain as they might, by rapine or service, the faithful followers of their exile. Onulf directed his steps towards Constantinople, where he sullied, by the assassination of a generous benefactor, the fame which he had acquired in arms. His brother Odoacer led a wandering life among the barbarians of Noricum, with a mind and a fortune suited to the most desperate adventures; and when he had fixed his choice, he piously visited the cell of Severinus, the popular saint of the country, to solicit his approbation and blessing. The lowness of the door would not admit the lofty stature of Odoacer: he was obliged to stoop; but in that humble attitude the saint could discern the symptoms of his future greatness; and addressing him in a prophetic tone, "Pursue," (said he) "your "design; proceed to Italy; you will soon cast "away this coarse garment of skins; and your "wealth will be adequate to the liberality of "your mind."[f] The barbarian, whose daring

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[e] Jornandes, c. 53, 54, p. 692-695. M. de Buat (Hist. des Peuples de l'Europe, tom. viii, p. 221-228) has clearly explained the origin and adventures of Odoacer. I am almost inclined to believe that he was the same who pillaged Angers, and commanded a fleet of Saxon pirates on the ocean. Greg. Turon. l. ii, c. 18, in tom. ii, p. 170.

[f] Vade ad Italiam, vade vilissimis nunc pellibus coopertis: sed multis cito plurima largiturus. Anonym. Vales. p. 717. He quotes the life of St Severinus, which is extant, and contains much unknown and valuable history; it was composed by his disciple Eugipius (A. D. 511), thirty years after his death. See Tillemont, Mem. Eccles. tom. xvi, p. 168-181.

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spirit accepted and ratified the prediction, was admitted into the service of the western empire, and soon obtained an honourable rank in the guards. His manners were gradually polished, his military skill was improved, and the confederates of Italy would not have elected him for their general, unless the exploits of Odoacer had established a high opinion of his courage and capacity.[g] Their military acclamations saluted him with the title of king: but he abstained, during his whole reign, from the use of the purple and diadem,[h] lest he should offend those princes, whose subjects, by their accidental mixture, had formed the victorious army which time and policy might insensibly unite into a great nation.

Extinction of the western empire, A. D. 476, or A. D. 479.

Royalty was familiar to the barbarians, and the submissive people of Italy was prepared to obey, without a murmur, the authority which he should condescend to exercise as the vicegerent of the emperor of the West. But Odoacer had resolved to abolish that useless and expensive office; and such is the weight of antique prejudice, that it required some boldness and penetration to discover the extreme facility of the enterprise. The unfortunate Augustulus was made the instrument of his own disgrace;

[g] Theophanes, who calls him a Goth, affirms, that he was educated, nursed (τραφεντος) in Italy (p. 102); and as this strong expression will not bear a literal interpretation, it must be explained by a long service in the imperial guards.

[h] Nomen regis Odoacer assumpsit, cum tamen neque purpurâ nec regalibus uteretur insignibus. Cassiodor. in Chron. A. D. 476. He seems to have assumed the abstract title of a king, without applying it to any particular nation or country.

he signified his resignation to the senate; and that assembly, in their last act of obedience to a Roman prince, still affected the spirit of freedom, and the forms of the constitution. An epistle was addressed, by their unanimous decree, to the emperor Zeno, the son-in-law and successor of Leo; who had lately been restored, after a short rebellion, to the Byzantine throne. They solemnly "disclaim the necessity, or even the "wish, of continuing any longer the imperial "succession in Italy; since, in their opinion, "the majesty of a sole monarch is sufficient to "pervade and protect, at the same time, both "the East and the West. In their own name, "and in the name of the people, they consent "that the seat of universal empire shall be transferred from Rome to Constantinople; and they "basely renounce the right of choosing their "master, the only vestige that yet remained of "the authority which had given laws to the "world. The republic (they repeat that name "without a blush) might safely confide in the "civil and military virtues of Odoacer; and "they humbly request, that the emperor would "invest him with the title of Patrician, and the "administration of the *diocese* of Italy." The deputies of the senate were received at Constantinople with some marks of displeasure and indignation; and when they were admitted to the audience of Zeno, he sternly reproached them with their treatment of the two emperors, Anthemius and Nepos, whom the East had successively granted to the prayers of Italy. "The

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"first," (continued he) "you have murdered; "the second you have expelled: but the se- "cond is still alive, and whilst he lives he is your "lawful sovereign." But the prudent Zeno soon deserted the hopeless cause of his abdicated colleague. His vanity was gratified by the title of sole emperor, and by the statues erected to his honour in the several quarters of Rome; he entertained a friendly, though ambiguous, correspondence with the *patrician* Odoacer; and he gratefully accepted the imperial ensigns, the sacred ornaments of the throne and palace, which the barbarian was not unwilling to remove from the sight of the people.[i]

Augustulus is banished to the Lucullan villa.

In the space of twenty years since the death of Valentinian, nine emperors had successively disappeared; and the son of Orestes, a youth recommended only by his beauty, would be the least entitled to the notice of posterity, if his reign, which was marked by the extinction of the Roman empire in the West, did not leave a memorable era in the history of mankind.[k] The patrician Orestes had married the daughter of Count *Romulus*, of Petovio in Noricum: the

[i] Malchus, whose loss excites our regret, has preserved (in Excerpt. Legat. p. 93) this extraordinary embassy from the senate to Zeno. The anonymous fragment (p. 717), and the extract from Candidus (apud Phot. p. 176), are likewise of some use.

[k] The precise year in which the western empire was extinguished is not positively ascertained. The vulgar era of A. D. 476, *appears* to have the sanction of authentic chronicles. But the two dates assigned by Jornandes (c. 46, p. 680), would delay that great event to the year 479: and though M. de Buat has overlooked *his* evidence, he produces (tom. viii, p. 261-288), many collateral circumstances in support of the same opinion.

name of *Augustus*, notwithstanding the jealousy of power, was known at Aquileia as a familiar surname; and the appellations of the two great founders of the city, and of the monarchy, were thus strangely united in the last of their successors.[l] The son of Orestes assumed and disgraced the names of Romulus Augustus; but the first was corrupted into Momyllus, by the Greeks, and the second has been changed by the Latins into the contemptible diminutive Augustulus. The life of this inoffensive youth was spared by the generous clemency of Odoacer; who dismissed him, with his whole family, from the imperial palace, fixed his annual allowance at six thousand pieces of gold, and assigned the castle of Lucullus, in Campania, for the place of his exile or retirement.[m] As soon as the Romans breathed from the toils of the Punic war, they were attracted by the beauties and the pleasures of Campania; and the country-house of the elder Scipio at Liternum, exhibited a lasting

[l] See his medals in Ducange (Fam. Byzantin. p. 81), Priscus (Excerpt. Legat. p. 56. Maffei Osservazioni Letterarie, tom. ii, p. 314). We may allege a famous and similar case. The meanest subjects of the Roman empire assumed the *illustrious* name of *Patricius*, which, by the conversion of Ireland, has been communicated to a whole nation.

[m] Ingrediens autem Ravennam deposuit Augustulum de regno, cujus infantiam misertus concessit ei sanguinem; et quia pulcher erat, tamen donavit ei reditum sex millia solidos, et misit eum intra Campaniam cum parentibus suis libere vivere. Anonym. Vales. p. 716. Jornandes says (c. 46, p. 680), in Lucullano Campaniæ castello exilii pœna damnavit.

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model of their rustic simplicity.[n] The delicious shores of the bay of Naples were crowded with villas; and Sylla applauded the masterly skill of his rival, who had seated himself on the lofty promontory of Misenum, that commands, on every side, the sea and land, as far as the boundaries of the horizon.[o] The villa of Marius was purchased, within a few years, by Lucullus, and the price had increased from two thousand five hundred, to more than fourscore thousand, pounds sterling.[p] It was adorned by the new proprietor with Grecian arts, and Asiatic treasures; and the houses and gardens of Lucullus obtained a distinguished rank in the list of imperial palaces.[q] When the Vandals became

[n] See the eloquent Declamation of Seneca (epist. lxxxvi). The philosopher might have recollected, that all luxury is relative; and that the elder Scipio, whose manners were polished by study and conversation, was himself accused of that vice by his ruder contemporaries (Livy, xxix, 19).

[o] Sylla, in the language of a soldier, praised his *peritia castrametandi* (Plin. Hist. Natur. xviii, 7). Phædrus, who makes its shady walks (*læta viridia*) the scene of an insipid fable (ii, 5), has thus described the situation:

> Cæsar Tiberius quam petens Neapolim,
> In Mesenensem villam venisset suam;
> Quæ monte summo posita Luculli manu
> Prospectat Siculum et prospicit Tuscum mare.

[p] From seven myriads and a half to two hundred and fifty myriads of drachmæ. Yet even in the possession of Marius, it was a luxurious retirement. The Romans derided his indolence: they soon bewailed his activity. See Plutarch, in Mario, tom. ii, p. 524.

[q] Lucullus had other villas of equal, though various, magnificence, at Baiæ, Naples, Tusculum, &c. He boasted that he changed his climate with the storks and cranes. Plutarch, in Lucull. tom. iii, p. 193.

formidable to the sea-coast, the Lucullan villa, on the promontory of Misenum, gradually assumed the strength and appellation of a strong castle, the obscure retreat of the last emperor of the West. About twenty years after that great revolution, it was converted into a church and monastery, to receive the bones of St Severinus. They securely reposed, amidst the broken trophies of Cimbric and Armenian victories, till the beginning of the tenth century; when the fortifications, which might afford a dangerous shelter to the Saracens, were demolished by the people of Naples.[r] CHAP. XXXVI.

Odoacer was the first barbarian who reigned in Italy, over a people who had once asserted their just superiority above the rest of mankind. The disgrace of the Romans still excites our respectful compassion, and we fondly sympathise with the imaginary grief and indignation of their degenerate posterity. But the calamities of Italy had gradually subdued the proud consciousness of freedom and glory. In the age of Roman virtue, the provinces were subject to the arms, and the citizens to the laws, of the republic; till those laws were subverted by civil discord, and Decay of the Roman spirit.

[r] Severinus died in Noricum, A. D. 482. Six years afterwards, his body, which scattered miracles as it passed, was transported by his disciples into Italy. The devotion of a Neapolitan lady invited the saint to the Lucullan villa, in the place of Augustulus, who was probably no more. See Baronius (Annal. Eccles. A. D. 496, N°. 50, 51), and Tillemont (Mem. Eccles. tom. xvi, p. 178-181), from the original life by Eugipius. The narrative of the last migration of Severinus to Naples, is likewise an authentic piece.

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both the city and the provinces became the servile property of a tyrant. The forms of the constitution, which alleviated or disguised their abject slavery, were abolished by time and violence; the Italians alternately lamented the presence or the absence of the sovereigns, whom they detested or despised; and the succession of five centuries inflicted the various evils of military license, capricious despotism, and elaborate oppression. During the same period, the barbarians had emerged from obscurity and contempt, and the warriors of Germany and Scythia were introduced into the provinces, as the servants, the allies, and at length the masters, of the Romans, whom they insulted or protected. The hatred of the people was suppressed by fear; they respected the spirit and splendour of the martial chiefs who were invested with the honours of the empire; and the fate of Rome had long depended on the sword of those formidable strangers. The stern Ricimer, who trampled on the ruins of Italy, had exercised the power, without assuming the title, of a king; and the patient Romans were insensibly prepared to acknowledge the royalty of Odoacer and his barbaric successors.

Character and reign of Odoacer, A. D. 476–490.

The king of Italy was not unworthy of the high station to which his valour and fortune had exalted him; his savage manners were polished by the habits of conversation; and he respected, though a conqueror and a barbarian, the institutions, and even the prejudices, of his subjects.

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After an interval of seven years, Odoacer restored the consulship of the West. For himself, he modestly, or proudly, declined an honour which was still accepted by the emperors of the East; but the curule chair was successively filled by eleven of the most illustrious senators;[s] and the list is adorned by the respectable name of Basilius, whose virtues claimed the friendship and grateful applause of Sidonius, his client.[t] The laws of the emperors were strictly enforced, and the civil administration of Italy was still exercised by the prætorian prefect, and his subordinate officers. Odoacer devolved on the Roman magistrates the odious and oppressive task of collecting the public revenue; but he reserved for himself the merit of seasonable and popular indulgence.[u] Like the rest of the barbarians, he had been instructed in the Arian heresy; but he revered the monastic and episcopal characters; and the silence of the catholics attests the toleration which they enjoyed. The peace of the city required the interposition

[s] The consular Fasti may be found in Pagi or Muratori. The consuls named by Odoacer, or perhaps by the Roman senate, appear to have been acknowledged in the eastern empire.

[t] Sidonius Apollinaris (l. i, epist. 9, p. 22, edit. Sirmond) has compared the two leading senators of his time (A. D. 468), Gennadius Avienus and Cæcina Basilius. To the former he assigns the specious, to the latter the solid, virtues of public and private life. A. Basilius, junior, possibly his son, was consul in the year 480.

[u] Epiphanius interceded for the people of Pavia; and the king first granted an indulgence of five years, and afterwards relieved them from the oppression of Pelagius, the prætorian prefect (Ennodius, in Vit. St Epiphan. in Sirmond. Oper. tom. i, p. 1670, 1672).

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of his prefect Basilius in the choice of a Roman pontiff: the decree which restrained the clergy from alienating their lands, was ultimately designed for the benefit of the people, whose devotion would have been taxed to repair the dilapidations of the church.[x] Italy was protected by the arms of its conqueror; and its frontiers were respected by the barbarians of Gaul and Germany, who had so long insulted the feeble race of Theodosius. Odoacer passed the Hadriatic, to chastise the assassins of the emperor Nepos, and to acquire the maritime province of Dalmatia. He passed the Alps, to rescue the remains of Noricum from Fava, or Feletheus, king of the Rugians, who held his residence beyond the Danube. The king was vanquished in battle, and led away prisoner; a numerous colony of captives and subjects was transplanted into Italy; and Rome, after a long period of defeat and disgrace, might claim the triumph of her barbarian master.[y]

Miserable state of Italy.

Notwithstanding the prudence and success of Odoacer, his kingdom exhibited the sad prospect of misery and desolation. Since the age of Tiberius, the decay of agriculture had been felt

[x] See Baronius, Annal. Eccles. A. D. 483, N°. 10-15. Sixteen years afterwards, the irregular proceedings of Basilius were condemned by Pope Symmachus in a Roman synod.

[y] The wars of Odoacer are concisely mentioned by Paul the deacon (de Gest. Langobard. l. i, c. 19, p. 757, edit. Grot.), and in the two Chronicles of Cassiodorius and Cuspinian. The life of St Severinus, by Eugipius, which the Count de Buat (Hist. des Peuples, &c. tom. viii, c. 1, 4, 8, 9) has diligently studied, illustrates the ruin of Noricum and the Bavarian antiquities.

in Italy; and it was a just subject of complaint, that the life of the Roman people depended on the accidentsof the winds and waves.[z] In the division and decline of the empire, the tributary harvests of Egypt and Africa were withdrawn; the numbers of the inhabitants continually diminished with the means of subsistence; and the country was exhausted by the irretrievable losses of war, famine,[a] and pestilence. St Ambrose has deplored the ruin of a populous district, which had been once adorned with the flourishing cities of Bologna, Modena, Regium, and Placentia.[b] Pope Gelasius was a subject of Odoacer, and he affirms, with strong exaggeration, that in Æmilia, Tuscany, and the adjacent provinces, the human species was almost extirpated.[c] The plebeians of Rome, who were fed by the hand of their master, perished or disappeared, as soon as his liberality was suppressed; the decline of the arts reduced the industrious mechanic to idleness and want; and the senators, who might support with patience the ruin of

[z] Tacit. Annal. iii, 53. The Recherches sur l'Administration des Terres chez les Romains (p. 351-361), clearly state the progress of internal decay.

[a] A famine, which afflicted Italy at the time of the irruption of Odoacer, king of the Heruli, is eloquently described in prose and verse, by a French poet (Les Mois, tom. ii, p. 174, 206, edit. in 12mo.). I am ignorant from whence he derives his information; but I am well assured that he relates some facts incompatible with the truth of history.

[b] See the xxxixth epistle of St Ambrose, as it is quoted by Muratori, sopra le Antichità Italiane, tom. i, Dissert. xxi, p. 354.

[c] Æmilia, Tuscia, ceteræque provinciæ in quibus hominum prope nullus exsistit. Gelasius, Epist. ad Andromachum, ap. Baronium, Annal. Eccles. A. D. 496, N°. 36.

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their country, bewailed their private loss of wealth and luxury. One-third of those ample estates, to which the ruin of Italy is originally imputed,[d] was extorted for the use of the conquerors. Injuries were aggravated by insults; the sense of actual sufferings was embittered by the fear of more dreadful evils; and as new lands were allotted to new swarms of barbarians, each senator was apprehensive lest the arbitrary surveyors should approach his favourite villa, or his most profitable farm. The least unfortunate were those who submitted without a murmur to the power which it was impossible to resist. Since they desired to live, they owed some gratitude to the tyrant who had spared their lives; and since he was the absolute master of their fortunes, the portion which he left must be accepted as his pure and voluntary gift.[e] The distress of Italy was mitigated by the prudence and humanity of Odoacer, who had bound himself, at the price of his elevation, to satisfy the demands of a licentious and turbulent multitude. The kings of the barbarians were frequently resisted, deposed, or murdered, by their *native* subjects; and the various bands of Italian mercenaries, who associated under the standard of an elective general, claimed a larger

[d] Verumque confitentibus, latifundia perdidere Italiam. Plin. Hist. Natur. xviii, 7.

[e] Such are the topics of consolation, or rather of patience, which Cicero (ad Familiares, lib. ix, epist. 17) suggests to his friend Papirius Pætus under the military despotism of Cæsar. The argument, however, of "vivere pulcherrimum duxi," is more forcibly addressed to a Roman philosopher, who possessed the free alternative of life or death.

privilege of freedom and rapine. A monarchy destitute of national union, and hereditary right, hastened to its dissolution. After a reign of fourteen years, Odoacer was oppressed by the superior genius of Theodoric, king of the Ostrogoths, a hero alike excellent in the arts of war and of government, who restored an age of peace and prosperity, and whose name still excites and deserves the attention of mankind.

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Origin, progress, and effects of the monastic life—Conversion of the barbarians to Christianity and Arianism—Persecution of the Vandals in Africa—Extinction of Arianism among the barbarians.

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THE indissoluble connection of civil and ecclesiastical affairs, has compelled and encouraged me to relate the progress, the persecutions, the establishment, the divisions, the final triumph, and the gradual corruption of Christianity. I have purposely delayed the consideration of two religious events, interesting in the study of human nature, and important in the decline and fall of the Roman empire. I. The institution of the monastic life;[a] and, II. The conversion of the northern barbarians.

I. The MONASTIC LIFE. Origin of the monks.

I. Prosperity and peace introduced the distinction of the *vulgar* and the *Ascetic Christians*.[b] The loose and imperfect practice of religion sa-

[a] The origin of the monastic institution has been laboriously discussed by Thomasin (Discipline de l'Eglise, tom. i, p. 1419-1426), and Helyot (Hist. des Ordres Monastiques, tom. i, p. 1-66). These authors are very learned and tolerably honest, and their difference of opinion shews the subject in its full extent. Yet the cautious protestant, who distrusts *any* popish guides, may consult the seventh book of Bingham's Christian Antiquities.

[b] See Useb. Demonstrat. Evangel. (l. i, p. 20, 21, edit. Græc. Rob. Stephani, Paris, 1545). In his Ecclesiastical History, published twelve years after the Demonstration, Eusebius (l. ii, c. 17) asserts the Christianity of the Therapeutæ; but he appears ignorant, that a similar institution was actually revived in Egypt.

tisfied the conscience of the multitude. The prince or magistrate, the soldier or merchant, reconciled their fervent zeal, and implicit faith, with the exercise of their profession, the pursuit of their interest, and the indulgence of their passions; but the Ascetics, who obeyed and abused the rigid precepts of the gospel, were inspired by the savage enthusiasm, which represents man as a criminal, and God as a tyrant. They seriously renounced the business, and the pleasures, of the age; abjured the use of wine, of flesh, and of marriage; chastised their body, mortified their affections, and embraced a life of misery, as the price of eternal happiness. In the reign of Constantine, the Ascetics fled from a profane and degenerate world, to perpetual solitude, or religious society. Like the first Christians of Jerusalem,[c] they resigned the use, or the property, of their temporal possessions; established regular communities of the same sex, and a similar disposition; and assumed the names of *Hermits*, *Monks*, and *Anachorets*, expressive of their lonely retreat in a natural or artificial desert. They soon acquired the respect of the world, which they despised; and the loudest applause was bestowed on this DIVINE PHILOSOPHY,[d] which sur-

[c] Cassian (Collat. xviii, 5) claims this origin for the institution of the *Cœnobites*, which gradually decayed till it was restored by Anthony and his disciples.

[d] Ωφελιμωτατον γαρ τι χρημα εις ανθρωπους ελθουσα παρα Θεου η τοιαυτη φιλοσοφια. These are the expressive words of Sozomen, who copiously and agreeably describes (l. i, c. 12, 13, 14) the origin and

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passed, without the aid of science or reason, the laborious virtues of the Grecian schools. The monks might indeed contend with the Stoics, in the contempt of fortune, of pain, and of death: the Pythagorean silence and submission were revived in their servile discipline; and they disdained, as firmly as the Cynics themselves, all the forms and decencies of civil society. But the votaries of this divine philosophy aspired to imitate a purer and more perfect model. They trod in the footsteps of the prophets, who had retired to the desert;[e] and they restored the devout and contemplative life, which had been instituted by the Essenians, in Palestine and Egypt. The philosophic eye of Pliny had surveyed with astonishment a solitary people, who dwelt among the palm-trees near the Dead Sea; who subsisted without money, who were propagated without women; and who derived from the disgust and

progress of this monkish philosophy (See Suicer. Thesaur. Eccles. tom. ii, p. 1441). Some modern writers, Lipsius (tom. iv, p. 448; Manuduct. ad Philosoph. Stoic. iii, 13), and La Mothe le Vayer (tom. ix, de la Vertû des Payens, p. 228–262), have compared the Carmelites to the Pythagoreans, and the Cynics to the Capuchins.

[e] The Carmelites derive their pedigree, in regular succession, from the prophet Elijah (see the Theses of Beziers, A. D. 1682, in Bayle's Nouvelles de la Republique des Lettres, Oeuvres, tom. i, p. 82, &c. and the prolix irony of the Ordres Monastiques, an anonymous work, tom. i, p. 1-433; Berlin, 1751). Rome, and the inquisition of Spain, silenced the profane criticism of the Jesuits of Flanders. (Helyot, Hist. des Ordres Monastiques, tom. i, p. 282-300); and the statue of Elijah, the Carmelite, has been erected in the church of St Peter (Voyages du P. Labat, tom. iii, p. 87).

repentance of mankind, a perpetual supply of voluntary associates.[f] CHAP. XXXVII.

Antony and the monks of Egypt, A. D. 305.

Egypt, the fruitful parent of superstition, afforded the first example of the monastic life. Antony,[g] an illiterate[h] youth of the lower parts of Thebais, distributed his patrimony,[i] deserted his family and native home, and executed his *monastic* penance with original and intrepid fanaticism. After a long and painful noviciate, among the tombs, and in a ruined tower, he boldly advanced into the desert three days journey, to the eastward of the Nile; discovered a

[f] Plin. Hist. Natur. v, 15. Gens sola, et in toto orbe præter ceteras mira, sine ullâ feminâ, omni venere abdicatâ, sine pecuniâ, socia palmarum. Ita per seculorum millia (incredibile dictu) gens æterna est in quâ nemo nascitur. Tam fœcunda illis aliorum vitæ pœnitentia est. He places them just beyond the noxious influence of the lake, and names Engaddi and Masada as the nearest towns. The Laura, and monastery of St Sabas, could not be far distant from this place. See Reland. Palestin. tom. i, p. 295; tom. ii, p. 763, 874, 880, 890.

[g] See Athanas. Op. tom. ii, p. 450-505, and the Vit. Patrum, p. 26-74, with Rosweyde's Annotations. The former is the Greek original; the latter, a very ancient Latin version by Evagrius, the friend of St Jerom.

[h] Γραμματα μεν μαθειν ουκ ηνεσχετο. Athanas. tom. ii, in Vit. St Anton. p. 452; and the assertion of his total ignorance has been received by many of the ancients and moderns. But Tillemont (Mem. Eccles. tom. vii, p. 666) shews, by some probable arguments, that Antony could read and write in the Coptic, his native tongue; and that he was only a stranger to the *Greek letters*. The philosopher Synesius (p. 51) acknowledges, that the natural genius of Antony did not require the aid of learning.

[i] *Aruræ* autem erant ei trecentæ uberes, et valde optimæ (Vit. Patr. l. i, p. 36). If the *Arura* be a square measure of an hundred Egyptian cubits (Rosweyde, Onomasticon ad Vit. Patrum, p. 1014, 1015), and the Egyptian cubit of all ages be equal to twenty-two English inches (Graves, vol. i, p. 233), the arura will consist of about three quarters of an English acre.

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lonely spot, which possessed the advantages of shade and water, and fixed his last residence on mount Colzim near the Red Sea; where an ancient monastery still preserves the name and memory of the saint.[k] The curious devotion of the Christians pursued him to the desert; and when he was obliged to appear at Alexandria, in the face of mankind, he supported his fame with discretion and dignity. He enjoyed the friendship of Athanasius, whose doctrine he approved; and the Egyptian peasant respectfully declined a respectful invitation from the emperor Constantine. The venerable patriarch (for Antony attained the age of one hundred and five years) beheld the numerous progeny which had been formed by his example and his lessons. The prolific colonies of monks multiplied with rapid increase on the sands of Libya, upon the rocks of Thebais, and in the cities of the Nile. To the south of Alexandria, the mountain, and adjacent desert of Nitria, were peopled by five thousand anachorets; and the traveller may still investigate the ruins of fifty monasteries, which were planted in that barren soil by the disciples of Antony.[l] In the Upper Thebais,

A. D. 251-356.

[k] The description of the monastery is given by Jerom (tom. i, p. 248, 249, in Vit. Hilarion), and the P. Sicard (Missions du Levant, tom. v, p. 122-200). Their accounts cannot always be reconciled: the father painted from his fancy, and the Jesuit from his experience.

[l] Jerom. tom. i, p. 146, ad Eustochium. Hist. Lausiac. c. 7, in Vit. Patrum, p. 712. The P. Sicard (Missions du Levant, tom. ii, p. 29-79) visited, and has described, this desert, which now contains four monasteries, and twenty or thirty monks. See D'Anville, Description de l'Egypt, p. 74.

the vacant island of Tabenne[m] was occupied by Pachomius, and fourteen hundred of his brethren. That holy abbot successively founded nine monasteries of men, and one of women; and the festival of Easter sometimes collected fifty thousand religious persons, who followed his *angelic* rule of discipline.[n] The stately and populous city of Oxyrinchus, the seat of christian orthodoxy, had devoted the temples, the public edifices, and even the ramparts, to pious and charitable uses; and the bishop who might preach in twelve churches, computed ten thousand females, and twenty thousand males, of the monastic profession.[o] The Egyptians, who gloried in this marvellous revolution, were disposed to hope, and to believe, that the number of the monks was equal to the remainder of the people;[p] and posterity might repeat the saying, which had formerly been applied to the sacred

[m] Tabenne is a small island in the Nile, in the diocese of Tentyra or Dendera, between the modern town of Girge and the ruins of ancient Thebes (D'Anville, p. 194). M. de Tillemont doubts whether it was an isle; but I may conclude, from his own facts, that the primitive name was afterwards transferred to the great monastery of Bau or Pabau (Mem. Eccles. tom. vii, p. 678, 688).

[n] See in the Codex Regularum (published by Lucas Holstenius, Rome, 1661) a preface of St Jerom to his Latin version of the Rule of Pachomius, tom. i, p. 61.

[o] Rufin. c. 5, in Vit. Patrum, p. 459. He calls it, civitas ampla valde et populosa, and reckons twelve churches. Strabo (l. xvii, p. 1166), and Ammianus (xxii, 16), have made honourable mention of Oxyrinchus, whose inhabitants adored a small fish in a magnificent temple.

[p] Quanti populi habentur in urbibus, tanta pæna habentur in desertis multitudines monachorum. Rufin. c. 7, in Vit. Patrum, p. 461. He congratulates the fortunate change.

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animals of the same country, that, in Egypt, it was less difficult to find a god, than a man.

Propagation of the monastic life at Rome, A. D. 341.

Athanasius introduced into Rome the knowledge and practice of the monastic life; and a school of this new philosophy was opened by the disciples of Antony, who accompanied their primate to the holy threshold of the Vatican. The strange and savage appearance of these Egyptians excited, at first, horror and contempt, and, at length, applause and zealous imitation. The senators, and more especially the matrons, transformed their palaces and villas into religious houses; and the narrow institution of *six* vestals, was eclipsed by the frequent monasteries which were seated on the ruins of ancient temples, and in the midst of the Roman Forum.[q] Inflamed by the example of Antony, a Syrian youth, whose name was Hilarion,[r] fixed his dreary abode on a sandy beach, between the sea and a morass, about seven miles from Gaza. The austere penance, in which he persisted forty-eight years, diffused a similar enthusiasm; and the holy man was followed by a train of two or three thousand anachorets, whenever he visited the innumerable monasteries of Palestine. The fame of Basil[s] is

Hilarion, in Palestine, A. D. 328.

Basil in Pontus, A. D. 360.

[q] The introduction of the monastic life into Rome and Italy, is occasionally mentioned by Jerom (tom. i, p. 119, 120, 199).

[r] See the life of Hilarion, by St Jerom (tom. i, p. 241, 252). The stories of Paul, Hilarion, and Malchus, by the same author, are admirably told; and the only defect of these pleasing compositions is the want of truth and common sense.

[s] His original retreat was in a small village on the banks of the Iris, not far from Neo-Cæsarea. The ten or twelve years of his monastic life were disturbed by long and frequent avocations. Some

immortal in the monastic history of the East. With a mind that had tasted the learning and eloquence of Athens; with an ambition, scarcely to be satisfied by the archbishopric of Cæsarea, Basil retired to a savage solitude in Pontus; and deigned for a while to give laws to the spiritual colonies which he profusely scattered along the coast of the Black Sea. In the West, Martin of Tours,[t] a soldier, an hermit, a bishop, and a saint, established the monasteries of Gaul; two thousand of his disciples followed him to the grave; and his eloquent historian challenges the deserts of Thebais, to produce, in a more favourable climate, a champion of equal virtue. The progress of the monks was not less rapid, or universal, than that of Christianity itself. Every province, and, at last, every city, of the empire, was filled with their increasing multitudes; and the bleak and barren isles, from Lerins to Lipari, that arise out of the Tuscan sea, were chosen by the anachorets, for the place of their voluntary exile. An easy and perpetual intercourse by sea and land connected the provinces of the Roman world; and the life of Hilarion displays the facility with which an indigent hermit of Palestine might traverse Egypt, embark for Sicily,

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Martin in Gaul, A. D. 370.

critics have disputed the authenticity of his ascetic rules; but the external evidence is weighty, and they can only prove that it is the work of a real or affected enthusiast. See Tillemont, Mem. Eccles tom. ix, p. 636-644. Helyot. Hist. des Ordres Monastiques, tom. i, p. 175-181.

[t] See his life, and the Three Dialogues by Sulpicius Severus, who asserts (Dialog. i, 16), that the booksellers of Rome were delighted with the quick and ready sale of his popular work.

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escape to Epirus, and finally settle in the island of Cyprus.[a] The Latin Christians embraced the religious institutions of Rome. The pilgrims, who visited Jerusalem, eagerly copied, in the most distant climates of the earth, the faithful model of the monastic life. The disciples of Antony spread themselves beyond the tropic, over the christian empire of Ethiopia.[x] The monastery of Banchor,[y] in Flintshire, which contained above two thousand brethren, dispersed a numerous colony among the barbarians of Ireland;[z] and Iona, one of the Hebrides, which was planted by the Irish monks, diffused over the northern regions a doubtful ray of science and superstition.[a]

[a] When Hilarion sailed from Parætonium to Cape Pachynus, he offered to pay his passage with a book of the Gospels. Posthumian, a Gallic monk, who had visited Egypt, found a merchant-ship bound from Alexandria to Marseilles, and performed the voyage in thirty days (Sulp. Sever. Dialog. i, 1). Athanasius, who addressed his Life of St Antony to the foreign monks, was obliged to hasten the composition, that it might be ready for the sailing of the fleets (tom. ii, p. 451).

[x] See Jerom (tom. i, p. 126), Assemanni (Bibliot. Orient. tom. iv, p. 92, p. 857, 919), and Geddes (Church History of Ethiopia, p. 29, 30, 31). The Abyssinian monks adhere very strictly to the primitive institution.

[y] Cambden's Britannia, vol. i, p. 666, 667.

[z] All that learning can extract from the rubbish of the dark ages is copiously stated by Archbishop Usher, in his Britannicarum Ecclesiarum Antiquitates, cap. xvi, p. 425-503.

[a] This small, though not barren, spot, Iona, Hy, or Columbkill, only two miles in length, and one mile in breadth, has been distinguished, 1. By the monastery of St Columba, founded A. D. 566; whose abbot exercised an extraordinary jurisdiction over the bishops of Caledonia. 2. By a *classic* library, which afforded some hopes of an entire Livy; and, 3. By the tombs of sixty kings, Scots, Irish, and

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Causes of its rapid progress.

These unhappy exiles from social life were impelled by the dark and implacable genius of superstition. Their mutual resolution was supported by the example of millions, of either sex, of every age, and of every rank; and each proselyte, who entered the gates of a monastery, was persuaded, that he trod the steep and thorny path of eternal happiness.[b] But the operation of these religious motives was variously determined by the temper and situation of mankind. Reason might subdue, or passion might suspend, their influence: but they acted most forcibly on the infirm minds of children and females; they were strengthened by secret remorse, or accidental misfortune; and they might derive some aid from the temporal considerations of vanity or interest. It was naturally supposed that the pious and humble monks, who had renounced the world, to accomplish the work of their salvation, were the best qualified for the spiritual government of the Christians. The reluctant hermit was torn from his cell, and seated, amidst the acclamations of the people, on the episcopal throne: the monasteries of Egypt, of Gaul, and

Norwegians; who reposed in holy ground. See Usher (p. 311, 360-370), and Buchanan (Rer. Scot. l. ii, p. 15, edit. Ruddiman).

[b] Chrysostom (in the first tome of the Benedictine edition) has consecrated three books to the praise and defence of the monastic life. He is encouraged, by the example of the ark, to presume, that none but the elect (the monks) can possibly be saved (l. i, p. 55, 56). Elsewhere, indeed, he becomes more merciful (l. iii, p. 83, 84), and allows different degrees of glory, like the sun, moon, and stars. In this lively comparison of a king and a monk (l. iii, p. 116-121), he supposes (what is hardly fair) that the king will be more sparingly rewarded, and more rigorously punished.

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of the East, supplied a regular succession of saints and bishops; and ambition soon discovered the secret road which led to the possession of wealth and honours.[c] The popular monks, whose reputation was connected with the fame and success of the order, assiduously laboured to multiply the number of their fellow-captives. They insinuated themselves into noble and opulent families; and the specious arts of flattery and seduction were employed to secure those proselytes, who might bestow wealth or dignity on the monastic profession. The indignant father bewailed the loss, perhaps, of an only son;[d] the credulous maid was betrayed by vanity to violate the laws of nature; and the matron aspired to imaginary perfection, by renouncing the virtues of domestic life. Paula yielded to the persuasive eloquence of Jerom;[e] and the profane title of mother-in-law of God,[f] tempted that illustrious widow, to

[c] Thomasin (Discipline d'Eglise, tom. i, p. 1426, 1469), and Mabillon (Oeuvres Posthumes, tom. ii, p. 115-156). The monks were gradually adopted as a part of the ecclesiastical hierarchy.

[d] Dr Middleton (vol. i, p. 110) liberally censures the conduct and writings of Chrysostom, one of the most eloquent and successful advocates for the monastic life.

[e] Jerom's devout ladies form a very considerable portion of his works: the particular treatise, which he styles the Epitaph of Paula (tom. i, p. 169-192), is an elaborate and extravagant panegyric. The exordium is ridiculously turgid.—"If all the members of my body "were changed into tongues, and if all my limbs resounded with a "human voice, yet should I be incapable," &c.

[f] Socrus Dei esse cœpisti (Jerom, tom. i, p. 140, ad Eustochium). Rufinus (in Hieronym. Op. tom. iv, p. 223), who was justly scandalized, asks his adversary, From what pagan poet he had stolen an expression so impious and absurd?

consecrate the virginity of her daughter Eustochium. By the advice, and in the company, of her spiritual guide, Paula abandoned Rome and her infant son; retired to the holy village of Bethlem; founded an hospital and four monasteries; and acquired, by her alms and penance, an eminent and conspicuous station in the catholic church. Such rare and illustrious penitents were celebrated as the glory and example of their age; but the monasteries were filled by a crowd of obscure and abject plebeians,[g] who gained in the cloister much more than they had sacrificed in the world. Peasants, slaves, and mechanics, might escape from poverty and contempt, to a safe and honourable profession; whose apparent hardships were mitigated by custom, by popular applause, and by the secret relaxation of discipline.[h] The subjects of Rome, whose persons and fortunes were made responsible for unequal and exorbitant tributes, retired from the oppression of the imperial government: and the pusillanimous youth preferred the penance of a monastic, to the dangers of a

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[g] Nunc autem veniunt *plerumque* ad hanc professionem servitutis Dei, et ex conditione servili, vel etiam liberati, vel propter hoc a Dominis liberati sive liberandi; et ex vitâ rusticanâ, et ex opificum exercitatione, et plebeio labore. Augustin. de Oper. Monach. c. 22, ap. Thomassin. Discipline de l'Eglise, tom. iii, p. 1094. The Egyptian, who blamed Arsenius, owned that he led a more comfortable life as a monk, than as a shepherd. See Tillemont, Mem. Eccles. tom. xiv, p. 679.

[h] A Dominican friar (Voyages du P. Labat, tom. i, p. 10), who lodged at Cadiz in a convent of his brethren, soon understood, that their repose was never interrupted by nocturnal devotion; "quoiquo'n ne laisse pas de sonner pour l'edification du peuple."

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military life. The affrighted provincials, of every rank, who fled before the barbarians, found shelter and subsistence; whole legions were buried in these religious sanctuaries; and the same cause, which relieved the distress of individuals, impaired the strength and fortitude of the empire.[a]

Obedience of the monks.

The monastic profession of the ancients[k] was an act of voluntary devotion. The inconstant fanatic was threatened with the eternal vengeance of the god whom he deserted: but the doors of the monastery were still open for repentance. Those monks, whose conscience was fortified by reason or passion, were at liberty to resume the character of men and citizens; and even the spouses of Christ might accept the legal embraces of an earthly lover.[l] The examples of scandal, and the progress of superstition, suggested the propriety of more forcible restraints. After

[a] See a very sensible preface of Lucas Holstenius to the Codex Regularum. The emperors attempted to support the obligation of public and private duties; but the feeble dykes were swept away by the torrent of superstition; and Justinian surpassed the most sanguine wishes of the monks (Thomassin, tom. i, p. 1782-1799, and Bingham, l. vii, c. 3, p. 253).

[k] The monastic institutions, particularly those of Egypt, about the year 400, are described by four curious and devout travellers; Rufinus (Vit. Patrum. l. ii, iii, p. 424-536); Posthumian (Sulp. Sever. Dialog. i); Palladius (Hist. Lausiac. in Vit. Patrum, p. 709-863), and Cassian (see in tom. vii, Bibliothec. Max. Patrum, his four first books of Institutes, and the twenty-four Collations or Conferences).

[l] The example of Malchus (Jerom. tom. i, p. 256), and the design of Cassian and his friend (Collation xxiv, 1), are incontestable proofs of their freedom; which is elegantly described by Erasmus in his Life of St Jerom. See Chardon, Hist. des Sacremens, tom. vi, p. 279-300.

a sufficient trial, the fidelity of the novice was secured by a solemn and perpetual vow; and his irrevocable engagement was ratified by the laws of the church and state. A guilty fugitive was pursued, arrested, and restored to his perpetual prison; and the interposition of the magistrate oppressed the freedom and merit, which had alleviated, in some degree, the abject slavery of the monastic discipline.[m] The actions of a monk, his words, and even his thoughts, were determined by an inflexible rule,[n] or a capricious superior: the slightest offences were corrected by disgrace or confinement, extraordinary fasts or bloody flagellation; and disobedience, murmur, or delay, were ranked in the catalogue of the most heinous sins.[o] A blind submission to the

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[m] See the laws of Justinian (Novel. cxxiii, N°. 42), and of Lewis the Pious (in the historians of France, tom. vi, p. 427), and the actual jurisprudence of France, in Denissart (Decisions, &c. tom. iv, p. 855, &c.).

[n] The ancient Codex Regularum, collected by Benedict Anianinus, the reformer of the monks in the beginning of the ninth century, and published in the seventeenth, by Lucas Holstenius, contains thirty different rules for men and women. Of these seven were composed in Egypt, one in the East, one in Cappadocia, one in Italy, one in Africa, four in Spain, eight in Gaul, or France, and one in England.

[o] The rule of Columbanus, so prevalent in the West, inflicts one hundred lashes for very slight offences (Cod. Reg. part ii, p. 174). Before the time of Charlemagne, the abbots indulged themselves in mutilating their monks, or putting out their eyes; a punishment much less cruel than the tremendous *vade in pace* (the subterraneous dungeon, or sepulchre), which was afterwards invented. See an admirable discourse of the learned Mabillon (Oeuvres Posthumes, tom. ii, p. 321-336); who, on this occasion, seems to be inspired by the genius of humanity. For such an effort, I can forgive his defence of the holy tear of Vendome (p. 361-399).

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commands of the abbot, however absurd, or even criminal, they might seem, was the ruling principle, the first virtue of the Egyptian monks; and their patience was frequently exercised by the most extravagant trials. They were directed to remove an enormous rock; assiduously to water a barren staff, that was planted in the ground, till, at the end of three years, it should vegetate and blossom like a tree; to walk into a fiery furnace; or to cast their infant into a deep pond; and several saints, or madmen, have been immortalized in monastic story, by their thoughtless, and fearless, obedience.[p] The freedom of the mind, the source of every generous and rational sentiment, was destroyed by the habits of credulity and submission; and the monk, contracting the vices of a slave, devoutly followed the faith and passions of his ecclesiastical tyrant. The peace of the eastern church was invaded by a swarm of fanatics, incapable of fear, or reason, or humanity; and the imperial troops acknowledged, without shame, that they were much less apprehensive of an encounter with the fiercest barbarians.[q]

[p] Sulp. Sever. Dialog. i, 12, 13, p. 532, &c. Cassian. Institut. l. iv, c. 26, 27. "Præcipua ibi virtus et prima est obedientia." Among the Verba Seniorum (in Vit. Patrum, l. v, p. 617), the fourteenth libel or discourse is on the subject of obedience; and the jesuit Rosweyde, who published that huge volume for the use of convents, has collected all his scattered passages in his two copious indexes.

[q] Dr Jortin (Remarks on Ecclesiastical History, vol. iv, p. 161) has observed the scandalous valour of the Cappadocian monks, which was exemplified in the banishment of Chrysostom.

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Their dress and habitations.

Superstition has often framed and consecrated the fantastic garments of the monks:[r] but their apparent singularity sometimes proceeds from their uniform attachment to a simple and primitive model, which the revolutions of fashion have made ridiculous in the eyes of mankind. The father of the Benedictines expressly disclaims all idea of choice, or merit; and soberly exhorts his disciples to adopt the coarse and convenient dress of the countries which they may inhabit.[s] The monastic habits of the ancients varied with the climate, and their mode of life; and they assumed, with the same indifference, the sheepskin of the Egyptian peasants, or the cloak of the Grecian philosophers. They allowed themselves the use of linen in Egypt, where it was a cheap and domestic manufacture; but in the West, they rejected such an expensive article of foreign luxury.[t] It was the practice of the monks either to cut or shave their hair; they wrapped their heads in a cowl, to escape the sight of profane objects; their legs and feet were naked, except in the extreme cold of winter; and their slow and feeble steps were supported by a long staff. The aspect of a genuine anachoret was horrid and disgusting: every sensa-

[r] Cassian has simply, though copiously, described the monastic habit of Egypt (Institut. l. i), to which Sozomen (l. iii, c. 14) attributes such allegorical meaning and virtue.

[s] Regul. Benedict. N°. 55, in Cod. Regul. part ii, p. 51.

[t] See the Rule of Ferreolus, bishop of Ufez (N°. 31, in Cod. Regul. part ii, p. 136), and of Isidore, bishop of Seville (N°. 18, in Cod. Regul. part ii, p. 214).

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tion that is offensive to man, was thought acceptable to God; and the angelic rule of Tabenne condemned the salutary custom of bathing the limbs in water, and of anointing them with oil.[u] The austere monks slept on the ground, on a hard mat, or a rough blanket; and the same bundle of palm-leaves served them as a seat in the day, and a pillow in the night. Their original cells were low narrow huts, built of the slightest materials; which formed, by the regular distribution of the streets, a large and populous village, inclosing within the common wall, a church, an hospital, perhaps a library, some necessary offices, a garden, and a fountain or reservoir of fresh water. Thirty or forty brethren composed a family of separate discipline and diet; and the great monasteries of Egypt consisted of thirty or forty families.

Their diet.

Pleasure and guilt are synonymous terms in the language of the monks; and they had discovered, by experience, that rigid fasts and abstemious diet, are the most effectual preservatives against the impure desires of the flesh.[x] The

[u] Some partial indulgences were granted for the hands and feet. "Totum autem corpus nemo unguet nisi causâ infirmitatis, nec "lavabitur aquâ nudo corpore, nisi languor perspicuus sit." (Regul. Pachom. xcii, part i, p. 78).

[x] St Jerom, in strong, but indiscreet, language, expresses the most important use of fasting and abstinence.—"Non quod Deus "universitatis Creator et Dominus, intestinorum nostrorum rugitû, "et inanitate ventris, pulmonisque ardore delectetur, sed quod "aliter pudicitia tuta esse non possit." (Op. tom. i, p. 137, ad Eustochium). See the twelfth and twenty-second Collations of Cassian, *de Castitate*, and *de Illusionibus Nocturnis*.

rules of abstinence, which they imposed, or practised, were not uniform or perpetual: the cheerful festival of the Pentecost was balanced by the extraordinary mortification of Lent; the fervour of new monasteries was insensibly relaxed; and the voracious appetite of the Gauls could not imitate the patient and temperate virtue of the Egyptians.[y] The disciples of Antony and Pachomius were satisfied with their daily pittance,[z] of twelve ounces of bread, or rather biscuit,[a] which they divided into two frugal repasts, of the afternoon, and of the evening. It was esteemed a merit, and almost a duty, to abstain from the boiled vegetables, which were provided for the refectory; but the extraordinary bounty of the abbot sometimes indulged them with the luxury of cheese, fruit, sallad, and the small dried fish of the Nile.[b] A more ample latitude

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[y] Edacitas in Græcis gula est, in Gallis natura (Dialog. i, c. 4, p. 521). Cassian fairly owns, that the perfect model of abstinence cannot be imitated in Gaul, on account of the aerem temperies, and the qualitas nostræ fragilitatis (Institut. iv, 11). Among the western rules, that of Columbanus is the most austere; he had been educated amidst the poverty of Ireland, as rigid perhaps, and inflexible, as the abstemious virtue of Egypt. The rule of Isidore of Seville is the mildest: on holidays he allows the use of flesh.

[z] "Those who drink only water, and have no nutritious liquor, "ought, at least, to have a pound and a half (*twenty-four ounces*) of "bread every day." State of Prisons, p. 40, by Mr Howard

[a] See Cassian, Collat. l. ii, 19, 20, 21. The small loaves, or biscuit, of six ounces each, had obtained the name of *Paximacia* (Rosweyde, Onomasticon, p. 1045). Pachomius, however, allowed his monks some latitude in the quantity of their food; but he made them work in proportion as they eat (Pallad. in Hist. Lausiac. c. 38, 39, in Vit. Patrum, l. viii, p. 736, 737).

[b] See the banquet to which Cassian (Collation viii, 1) was invited by Serenus, an Egyptian abbot.

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of sea and river fish was gradually allowed or assumed; but the use of flesh was long confined to the sick or travellers; and when it gradually prevailed in the less rigid monasteries of Europe, a singular distinction was introduced; as if birds, whether wild or domestic, had been less profane than the grosser animals of the field. Water was the pure and innocent beverage of the primitive monks; and the founder of the Benedictines regrets the daily portion of half a pint of wine, which had been extorted from him by the intemperance of the age.[c] Such an allowance might be easily supplied by the vineyards of Italy; and his victorious disciples, who passed the Alps, the Rhine, and the Baltic, required, in the place of wine, an adequate compensation of strong beer or cyder.

Their manual labour.

The candidate who aspired to the virtue of evangelical poverty, abjured, at his first entrance into a regular community, the idea, and even the name, of all separate, or exclusive, possession.[d] The brethren were supported by their manual labour; and the duty of labour was

[c] See the Rule of St Benedict, N°. 39, 40 (in Cod. Reg. part ii, p. 41, 42). Licet legamus vinum omnino monachorum non esse, sed quia nostris temporibus id monachis persuaderi non potest; he allows them a Roman *hemina*, a measure which may be ascertained from Arbuthnot's Tables.

[d] Such expressions as *my* book, *my* cloak, *my* shoes (Cassian. Institut. l. iv, c. 13), were not less severely prohibited among the western monks (Cod. Regul. part ii, p. 174, 235, 288); and the Rule of Columbanus punished them with six lashes. The ironical author of the *Ordres Monastiques*, who laughs at the foolish nicety of modern convents, seems ignorant that the ancients were equally absurd.

strenuously recommended as a penance, as an exercise, and as the most laudable means of securing their daily subsistence.[e] The garden, and fields, which the industry of the monks had often rescued from the forest of the morass, were diligently cultivated by their hands. They performed, without reluctance, the menial offices of slaves and domestics; and the several trades that were necessary to provide their habits, their utensils, and their lodging, were exercised within the precincts of the great monasteries. The monastic studies have tended, for the most part, to darken, rather than to dispel, the cloud of superstition. Yet the curiosity or zeal of some learned solitaries has cultivated the ecclesiastical, and even the profane, sciences: and posterity must gratefully acknowledge, that the monuments of Greek and Roman literature have been preserved and multiplied by their indefatigable pens.[f] But the more humble industry of the monks, especially in Egypt, was contented with the silent, sedentary occupation, of ma-

[e] Two great masters of ecclesiastical science, the P. Thomassin (Discipline de l'Eglise, tom. iii, p. 1090-1139), and the P. Mabillon (Etudes Monastiques, tom. i, p. 116-155), have seriously examined the manual labour of the monks, which the former considers as a *merit*, and the latter as a *duty*.

[f] Mabillon (Etudes Monastiques, tom. i, p. 47-55) has collected many curious facts to justify the literary labours of his predecessors, both in the East and West. Books were copied in the ancient monasteries of Egypt (Cassian. Institut. l. iv, c. 12), and by the disciples of St Martin (Sulp. Sever. in Vit. Martin. c. 7, p. 473). Cassiodorius has allowed an ample scope for the studies of the monks; and we shall not be scandalized, if their pen sometimes wandered from Chrysostom and Augustin, to Homer and Virgil.

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king wooden sandals, or of twisting the leaves of the palm tree into mats and baskets. The superfluous stock, which was not consumed in domestic use, supplied, by trade, the wants of the community: the boats of Tabenne, and the other monasteries of Thebais, descended the Nile as far as Alexandria; and, in a christian market, the sanctity of the workmen might enhance the intrinsic value of the work.

Their riches.

But the necessity of manual labour was insensibly superseded. The novice was tempted to bestow his fortune on the saints, in whose society he was resolved to spend the remainder of his life; and the pernicious indulgence of the laws permitted him to receive, for their use, any future accessions of legacy or inheritance.[g] Melania contributed her plate, three hundred pounds weight of silver; and Paula contracted an immense debt, for the relief of their favourite monks; who kindly imparted the merits of their prayers and penance to a rich and liberal sinner.[h] Time continually increased, and accidents could seldom diminish, the estates of the popular monasteries, which spread over the adjacent country and cities: and, in the first cen-

[g] Thomassin (Discipline de l'Eglise, tom. iii, p. 118, 145, 146. 171-179) has examined the revolution of the civil, canon, and common law. Modern France confirms the death which monks have inflicted on themselves, and justly deprives them of all right of inheritance.

[h] See Jerom, tom. i, p. 176, 183. The monk Pambo made a sublime answer to Melania, who wished to specify the value of her gift. —"Do you offer it to me, or to God? If to God, HE who suspends "the mountains in a balance, need not be informed of the weight of "your plate." (Pallad. Hist. Lausiac. c. 10, in the Vit. Patrum, l. viii, p. 715).

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tury of their institution, the infidel Zosimus has maliciously observed, that, for the benefit of the poor, the christian monks had reduced a great part of mankind to a state of beggary.[i] As long as they maintained their original fervour, they approved themselves, however, the faithful and benevolent stewards of the charity which was entrusted to their care. But their discipline was corrupted by prosperity; they gradually assumed the pride of wealth, and at last indulged the luxury of expense. Their public luxury might be excused by the magnificence of religious worship, and the decent motive of erecting durable habitations for an immortal society. But every age of the church has accused the licentiousness of the degenerate monks; who no longer remembered the object of their institution, embraced the vain and sensual pleasures of the world, which they had renounced,[k] and scandalously abused the riches which had been acquired by the austere virtues of their found-

[i] Το πολυ μερος της γης ωκειωσαντο, προφασει των μεταδιδοναι παντα πτωχοις, παντας (ως ειπειν) πτωχους καθιστανες. Zosim. l. v, p. 325. Yet the wealth of the eastern monks was far surpassed by the princely greatness of the Benedictines.

[k] The sixth general council (the Quinisext in Trullo, Canon xlvii, in Beveridge, tom. i, p. 218) restrains women from passing the night in a male, or men in a female, monastery. The seventh general council (the second Nicene, Canon xx, in Beveridge, tom. i, p. 325) prohibits the erection of double or promiscuous monasteries of both sexes; but it appears from Balsamon, that the prohibition was not effectual. On the irregular pleasures and expences of the clergy and *monks*, see Thomassin, tom. iii, p. 1334-1368.

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ers.[l] Their natural descent, from such painful and dangerous virtue, to the common vices of humanity, will not, perhaps, excite much grief or indignation in the mind of a philosopher.

Their solitude.

The lives of the primitive monks were consumed in penance and solitude; undisturbed by the various occupations which fill the time, and exercise the faculties, of reasonable, active, and social beings. Whenever they were permitted to step beyond the precincts of the monastery, two jealous companions were the mutual guards and spies of each other's actions; and, after their return, they were condemned to forget, or, at least, to suppress, whatever they had seen or heard in the world. Strangers, who professed the orthodox faith, were hospitably entertained in a separate apartment; but their dangerous conversation was restricted to some chosen elders of approved discretion and fidelity. Except in their presence, the monastic slave might not receive the visits of his friends or kindred; and it was deemed highly meritorious, if he afflicted a tender sister, or an aged parent, by the obstinate refusal of a word or look.[m] The monks themselves passed their lives, without personal

[l] I have somewhere heard or read the frank confession of a Benedictine abbot.—"My vow of poverty has given me an hundred thousand crowns a year; my vow of obedience has raised me to the rank of a sovereign prince." I forget the consequence of his vow of chastity.

[m] Pior, an Egyptian monk, allowed his sister to see him; but he shut his eyes during the whole visit. See Vit. Patrum, l. iii, p. 504. Many such examples might be added.

attachments, among a crowd, which had been formed by accident, and was detained, in the same prison, by force or prejudice. Recluse fanatics have few ideas or sentiments to communicate; a special license of the abbot regulated the time and duration of their familiar visits; and, at their silent meals, they were enveloped in their cowls, inaccessible, and almost invisible, to each other.[n] Study is the resource of solitude: but education had not prepared and qualified for any liberal studies the mechanics and peasants, who filled the monastic communities. They might work: but the vanity of spiritual perfection was tempted to disdain the exercise of manual labour; and the industry must be faint and languid, which is not excited by the sense of personal interest. CHAP. XXXVII.

Their devotion and visions.

According to their faith and zeal, they might employ the day, which they passed in their cells, either in vocal or mental prayer: they assembled in the evening, and they were awakened in the night, for the public worship of the monastery. The precise moment was determined by the stars, which are seldom clouded in the serene sky of Egypt; and a rustic horn or trumpet, the signal of devotion, twice interrupted the vast silence of the desert.[o] Even sleep, the last refuge

[n] The 7th, 8th, 29th, 30th, 31st, 34th, 57th, 60th, 86th, and 95th, articles of the Rule of Pachomius, impose most intolerable *laws* of silence and mortification.

[o] The diurnal and nocturnal prayers of the monks are copiously discussed by Cassian in the third and fourth books of his Institutions; and he constantly prefers the liturgy, which an angel had dictated to the monasteries of Tabenne.

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of the unhappy, was rigorously measured; the vacant hours of the monk heavily rolled along, without business or pleasure; and before the close of each day, he had repeatedly accused the tedious progress of the sun.[p] In this comfortless state, superstition still pursued and tormented her wretched votaries.[q] The repose which they had sought in the cloister was disturbed by tardy repentance, profane doubts, and guilty desires; and, while they considered each natural impulse as an unpardonable sin, they perpetually trembled on the edge of a flaming and bottomless abyss. From the painful struggles of disease and despair, these unhappy victims were sometimes relieved by madness or death; and, in the sixth century, an hospital was founded at Jerusalem for a small portion of the austere penitents, who were deprived of their senses.[r] Their visions, before they attained this extreme and acknowledged term of frenzy, have afforded ample materials of supernatural history. It was their firm persuasion, that

[p] Cassian, from his own experience, describes the *acedia*, or listlessness of mind and body, to which a monk was exposed, when he sighed to find himself alone. Sæpiusque egreditur et ingreditur cellam, et solem velut ad occasum tardius properantem crebrius intuetur (Institut. x, 1).

[q] The temptations and sufferings of Stagirius were communicated by that unfortunate youth to his friend St Chrysostom. See Middleton's Works, vol. i, p. 107-110. Something similar introduces the life of every saint; and the famous Inigo, or Ignatius, the founder of the Jesuits (Vide d'Inigo de Guiposcoa, tom. i, p. 29-38), may serve as a memorable example.

[r] Fleury, Hist. Ecclesiastique, tom. vii, p. 46. I have read somewhere, in the Vitæ Patrum, but I cannot recover the place, that *several*, I believe *many*, of the monks, who did not reveal their temptations to the abbot, became guilty of suicide.

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the air which they breathed, was peopled with invisible enemies; with innumerable demons, who watched every occasion, and assumed every form, to terrify, and above all to tempt, their unguarded virtue. The imagination, and even the senses, were deceived by the illusions of distempered fanaticism; and the hermit, whose midnight prayer was oppressed by involuntary slumber, might easily confound the phantoms of horror or delight, which had occupied his sleeping, and his waking, dreams.[s]

The Cœnobites and Anachorets.

The monks were divided into two classes: the *Cœnobites*, who lived under a common, and regular, discipline; and the *Anachorets*, who indulged their unsocial, independent, fanaticism.[t] The most devout, or the most ambitious, of the spiritual brethren, renounced the convent, as they had renounced the world. The fervent monasteries of Egypt, Palestine, and Syria, were surrounded by a *Laura*,[u] a distant circle of soli-

[s] See the seventh and eighth Collations of Cassian, who gravely examines, why the demons were grown less active and numerous since the time of St Antony. Rosweyde's copious index to the Vitæ Patrum will point out a variety of infernal scenes. The evils were most formidable in a female shape.

[t] For the distinction of the *Cœnobites* and the *Hermits*, specially in Egypt, see Jerom (tom. i, p. 45, ad Rusticum); the first Dialogue of Sulpicius Severus; Rufinus (c. 22, in Vit. Patrum, l. ii, p. 478); Paladius (c. 7, 69, in Vit. Patrum, l. viii, p. 712, 758), and; above all, the eighteenth and nineteenth Collations of Cassian. These writers, who compare the common and solitary life, reveal the abuse and danger of the latter.

[u] Suicer. Thesaur. Ecclesiast. tom. ii, p. 205, 218. Thomassin (Discipline de l'Eglise, tom. i, p. 1501, 502) gives a good account of these cells. When Gerasimus founded his monastery, in the wilderness of Jordan, it was accompanied by a Laura of seventy cells.

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tary cells; and the extravagant penance of the hermits was stimulated by applause and emulation.[x] They sunk under the painful weight of crosses and chains; and their emaciated limbs were confined by collars, bracelets, gauntlets, and greaves, of massy and rigid iron. All superfluous encumbrance of dress they contemptuously cast away; and some savage saints of both sexes have been admired, whose naked bodies were only covered by their long hair. They aspired to reduce themselves to the rude and miserable state in which the human brute is scarcely distinguished above his kindred animals: and a numerous sect of anachorets derived their name from their humble practice of grazing in the fields of Mesopotamia with the common herd.[y] They often usurped the den of some wild beast whom they affected to resemble; they buried themselves in some gloomy cavern which art or nature had scooped out of the rock; and the marble quarries of Thebais are still inscribed with the monuments of their penance.[z] The most perfect hermits are supposed to have passed many days without food, many nights without sleep, and many years without speaking;

[x] Theodoret, in a large volume (the Philotheus in Vit. Patrum, l. ix, p. 793-863), has collected the lives and miracles of thirty anachorets. Evagrius (l. i, c. 12) more briefly celebrates the monks and hermits of Palestine.

[y] Sozomen, l. vi, c. 33. The great St Ephrem composed a panegyric on these Βοσκοι, or grazing monks (Tillemont, Mem. Eccles. tom. viii, p. 292).

[z] The P. Sicard (Missions du Levant, tom. ii, p. 217-233) examined the caverns of the Lower Thebais with wonder and devotion. The inscriptions are in the old Syriac character, which was used by the Christians of Habyssinia.

and glorious was the *man* (I abuse that name) who contrived any cell, or seat, of a peculiar construction, which might expose him in the most inconvenient posture, to the inclemency of the seasons. CHAP. XXXVII.

Among these heroes of the monastic life, the name and genius of Simeon Stylites [a] have been immortalized by the singular invention of an aërial penance. At the age of thirteen the young Syrian deserted the profession of a shepherd, and threw himself into an austere monastery. After a long and painful noviciate, in which Simeon was repeatedly saved from pious suicide, he established his residence on a mountain about thirty or forty miles to the east of Antioch. Within the space of a *mandara*, or circle of stones, to which he had attached himself by a ponderous chain, he ascended a column, which was successively raised from the height of nine, to that of sixty, feet, from the ground.[b] In this last, and lofty station, the Syrian anachoret resisted the heat of thirty summers, and the cold of as many winters. Habit and exercise instructed him to maintain his dangerous situation without fear or giddiness, and successively to assume the different postures of devotion. He Simeon Stylites, A. D. 395-451.

[a] See Theodoret (in Vit. Patrum, l. ix, p. 848-854); Antony (in Vit. Patrum, l. i, p. 170-177); Cosmas (in Asseman. Bibliot. Orientat, tom. i, p. 239-253); Evagrius (l. i, c. 13, 14), and Tillemont (Mem. Eccles. tom. xv, p. 347-392).

[b] The narrow circumference of two cubits, or three feet, which Evagrius assigns for the summit of the column, is inconsistent with reason, with facts, and with the rules of architecture. The people who saw it from below might be easily deceived.

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sometimes prayed in an erect attitude, with his out-stretched arms, in the figure of a cross; but his most familiar practice was that of bending his meagre skeleton from the forehead to the feet; and a curious spectator, after numbering twelve hundred and forty-four repetitions, at length desisted from the endless account. The progress of an ulcer in his thigh[c] might shorten, but it could not disturb, this *celestial* life; and the patient hermit expired, without descending from his column. A prince who should capriciously inflict such tortures, would be deemed a tyrant; but it would surpass the power of a tyrant to impose a long and miserable existence on the reluctant victims of his cruelty. This voluntary martyrdom must have gradually destroyed the sensibility both of the mind and the body; nor can it be presumed that the fanatics, who torment themselves, are susceptible of any lively affection for the rest of mankind. A cruel unfeeling temper has distinguished the monks of every age and country: their stern indifference, which is seldom mollified by personal friendship, is inflamed by religious hatred; and their merciless zeal has strenuously administered the holy office of the inquisition.

Miracles and worship of the monks.

The monastic saints, who excite only the contempt and pity of a philosopher, were respected, and almost adored, by the prince and people.

[c] I must not conceal a piece of ancient scandal concerning the origin of this ulcer. It has been reported, that the devil, assuming an angelic form, invited him to ascend, like Elijah, into a fiery chariot. The saint too hastily raised his foot, and Satan seized the moment of inflicting this chastisement on his vanity.

Successive crowds of pilgrims from Gaul and India saluted the divine pillar of Simeon; the tribes of Saracens disputed in arms the honour of his benediction; the queens of Arabia and Persia gratefully confessed his supernatural virtue; and the angelic hermit was consulted by the younger Theodosius, in the most important concerns of the church and state. His remains were transported from the mountain of Telenissa, by a solemn procession of the patriarch, the master-general of the East, six bishops, twenty-one counts or tribunes, and six thousand soldiers; and Antioch revered his bones, as her glorious ornament and impregnable defence. The fame of the apostles and martyrs was gradually eclipsed by these recent and popular anachorets; the christian world fell prostrate before their shrines; and the miracles ascribed to their relics exceeded, at least in number and duration, the spiritual exploits of their lives. But the golden legend of their lives[d] was embellished by the artful credulity of their interested brethren; and a believing age was easily persuaded, that the slightest caprice of an Egyptian or a Syrian monk, had been sufficient to interrupt the eternal laws of the universe. The favourites of Heaven were accustomed to cure inveterate diseases with a touch, a word, or a distant mes-

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[d] I know not how to select or specify the miracles contained in the *Vitæ Patrum* of Rosweyde, as the number very much exceeds the thousand pages of that voluminous work. An elegant specimen may be found in the Dialogues of Sulpicius Severus, and his life of St Martin. He reveres the monks of Egypt; yet he insults them with the remark, that *they* never raised the dead; whereas the bishop of Tours had restored *three* dead men to life.

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sage; and to expel the most obstinate demons from the souls, or bodies, which they possessed. They familiarly accosted, or imperiously commanded, the lions and serpents of the desert; infused vegetation into a sapless trunk; suspended iron on the surface of the water; passed the Nile on the back of a crocodile, and refreshed themselves in a fiery furnace. These extravagant tales, which display the fiction, without the genius of poetry, have seriously affected the reason, the faith, and the morals of the Christians. Their credulity debased and vitiated the faculties of the mind; they corrupted the evidence of history; and superstition gradually extinguished the hostile light of philosophy and science. Every mode of religious worship which had been practised by the saints, every mysterious doctrine which they believed, was fortified by the sanction of divine revelation, and all the manly virtues were oppressed by the servile and pusillanimous reign of the monks. If it be possible to measure the interval between the philosophic writings of Cicero and the sacred legend of Theodoret, between the character of Cato and that of Simeon, we may appreciate the memorable revolution which was accomplished in the Roman empire within a period of five hundred years.

Superstition of the age.

II. Conversion of the Barbarians.

II. The progress of Christianity has been marked by two glorious and decisive victories: over the learned and luxurious citizens of the Roman empire; and over the warlike barbarians of Scythia and Germany, who subverted the empire, and embraced the religion, of the Romans. The

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Goths were the foremost of these savage proselytes; and the nation was indebted for its conversion to a countryman, or, at least, a subject, worthy to be ranked among the inventors of useful arts, who have deserved the remembrance and gratitude of posterity. A great number of Roman provincials had been led away into captivity by the Gothic bands, who ravaged Asia in the time of Gallienus: and of these captives, many were Christians, and several belonged to the ecclesiastical order. Those involuntary missionaries, dispersed as slaves in the villages of Dacia, successively laboured for the salvation of their masters. The seeds which they planted, of the evangelic doctrine, were gradually propagated; and before the end of a century, the pious work was achieved by the labours of Ulphilas, whose ancestors had been transported beyond the Danube from a small town of Cappadocia.

Ulphilas, apostle of the Goths, A. D. 360, &c.

Ulphilas, the bishop and apostle of the Goths,* acquired their love and reverence by his blameless life and indefatigable zeal; and they received, with implicit confidence, the doctrines of truth and virtue, which he preached and practised. He executed the arduous task of translating the Scriptures into their native tongue, a dialect of the German, or Teutonic, language: but he prudently suppressed the four books of Kings, as they might tend to irritate the fierce

* On the subject of Ulphilas, and the conversion of the Goths, see Sozomen, l. vi, c. 37; Socrates, l. iv, c. 33; Theodoret, l. iv, c. 37; Philostorg. l. ii, c. 5. The heresy of Philostorgius appears to have given him superior means of information.

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and sanguinary spirit of the barbarians. The rude, imperfect idiom of soldiers and shepherds, so ill qualified to communicate any spiritual ideas, was improved and modulated by his genius; and Ulphilas, before he could frame his version, was obliged to compose a new alphabet of twenty-four letters; four of which he invented, to express the peculiar sounds that were unknown to the Greek and Latin pronunciation.[f] But the prosperous state of the Gothic church was soon afflicted by war and intestine discord, and the chieftains were divided by religion as well as by interest. Fritigern, the friend of the Romans, became the proselyte of Ulphilas; while the haughty soul of Athanaric disdained the yoke of the empire, and of the gospel. The faith of the new converts was tried by the persecution which he excited. A waggon, bearing aloft the shapeless image of Thor, perhaps, or of Woden, was conducted in solemn procession through the streets of the camp; and the rebels, who refused to worship the God of their fathers, were immediately burnt, with their tents and families. The character of Ulphilas recommended him to the esteem of the eastern court, where he twice appeared as the minister of peace; he

[f] A mutilated copy of the four gospels, in the Gothic version, was published A. D. 1665, and is esteemed the most ancient monument of the Teutonic language, though Wetstein attempts, by some frivolous conjectures, to deprive Ulphilas of the honour of the work. Two of the four additional letters express the *W*, and our own *Th*. See Simon. Hist. Critique du Nouveau Testament, tom. ii, p. 219-223. Mill. Prolegom. p. 151, edit. Kuster. Wetstein, Prolegom. tom. i, p. 114.

pleaded the cause of the distressed Goths, who implored the protection of Valens; and the name of *Moses* was applied to this spiritual guide, who conducted his people, through the deep waters of the Danube, to the Land of Promise.[g] The devout shepherds, who were attached to his person, and tractable to his voice, acquiesced in their settlement, at the foot of the Mæsian mountains, in a country of woodlands and pastures, which supported their flocks and herds, and enabled them to purchase the corn and wine of the more plentiful provinces. These harmless barbarians multiplied in obscure peace, and the profession of Christianity.[h] CHAP. XXXVII.

Their fiercer brethren, the formidable Visigoths, universally adopted the religion of the Romans, with whom they maintained a perpetual intercourse of war, of friendship, or of conquest. In their long and victorious march from the Danube to the Atlantic ocean, they converted their allies; they educated the rising generation; and the devotion which reigned in the camp of Alaric, or the court of Thoulouse, might edify, or disgrace, the palaces of Rome and Constantinople.[i] During the same period, Christia- The Goths, Vandals, Burgundians, &c. embrace Christianity, A. D. 400, &c.

[g] Philostorgius erroneously places this passage under the reign of Constantine; but I am much inclined to believe that it preceded the great emigration.

[h] We are obliged to Jornandes (de Reb. Get. c. 51, p. 688) for a short and lively picture of these lesser Goths. Gothi minores, populus immensus, cum suo Pontifice ipsoque primate Wulfila. The last words, if they are not mere tautology, imply some temporal jurisdiction.

[i] At non ita Gothi non ita Vandali; malis licet doctoribus instituti, meliores tamen etiam in hâc parte quam nostri. Salvian de Gubern. Dei, l. vii, p. 243

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nity was embraced by almost all the barbarians, who established their kingdoms on the ruins of the western empire; the Burgundians in Gaul, the Suevi in Spain, the Vandals in Africa, the Ostrogoths in Pannonia, and the various bands of mercenaries, that raised Odoacer to the throne of Italy. The Franks and the Saxons still persevered in the errors of paganism; but the Franks obtained the monarchy of Gaul by their submission to the example of Clovis; and the Saxon conquerors of Britain were reclaimed from their savage superstition by the missionaries of Rome. These barbarian proselytes displayed an ardent and successful zeal in the propagation of the faith. The Merovingian kings, and their successors, Charlemagne and the Othos, extended, by their laws and victories, the dominion of the cross. England produced the apostle of Germany; and the evangelic light was gradually diffused from the neighbourhood of the Rhine, to the nations of the Elbe, the Vistula, and the Baltic.[k]

Motives of their faith.

The different motives which influenced the reason, or the passions, of the barbarian converts, cannot easily be ascertained. They were often capricious and accidental; a dream, an omen, the report of a miracle, the example of some priest, or hero, the charms of a believing wife, and, above all, the fortunate event of a prayer, or vow,

[k] Mosheim has slightly sketched the progress of Christianity in the North, from the fourth to the fourteenth century. The subject would afford materials for an ecclesiastical, and even philosophical, history.

which, in a moment of danger, they had addressed to the God of the Christians.[l] The early prejudices of education were insensibly erased by the habits of frequent and familiar society; the moral precepts of the gospel were protected by the extravagant virtues of the monks; and a spiritual theology was supported by the visible power of relics, and the pomp of religious worship. But the rational and ingenious mode of persuasion, which a Saxon bishop[m] suggested to a popular saint, might sometimes be employed by the missionaries, who laboured for the conversion of infidels. "Admit," says the sagacious disputant, "whatever they are pleased to assert "of the fabulous and carnal genealogy of their "gods and goddesses, who are propagated from "each other. From this principle deduce their "imperfect nature and human infirmities, the "assurance they were *born*, and the probability "that they will *die*. At what time, by what "means, from what cause, were the eldest of the "gods or goddesses produced? Do they still "continue, or have they ceased, to propagate? "If they have ceased, summon your antagonists "to declare the reason of this strange alteration. "If they still continue, the number of the gods

[l] To such a cause has Socrates (l. vii, c. 30) ascribed the conversion of the Burgundians, whose christian piety is celebrated by Orosius (l. vii, c. 19).

[m] See an original and curious epistle from Daniel, the first bishop of Winchester (Beda, Hist. Eccles. Anglorum, l. v, c. 18, p. 203, edit. Smith), to St Boniface, who preached the gospel among the Savages of Hesse and Thuringia. Epistol. Bonifacii, lxvii, in the Maxima Bibliotheca Patrum, tom. xiii, p. 98.

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" must become infinite; and shall we not risk, by " the indiscreet worship of some impotent deity, " to excite the resentment of his jealous supe- " rior? The visible heavens and earth, the whole " system of the universe, which may be concei- " ved by the mind, is it created or eternal? If " created, how, or where, could the gods them- " selves exist before the creation? If eternal, " how could they assume the empire of an inde- " pendent and pre-existing world? Urge these " arguments with temper and moderation; insi- " nuate, at seasonable intervals, the truth and " beauty of the christian revelation; and en- " deavour to make the unbelievers ashamed, " without making them angry." This metaphysical reasoning, too refined perhaps for the barbarians of Germany, was fortified by the grosser weight of authority and popular consent. The advantage of temporal prosperity had deserted the pagan cause, and passed over to the service of Christianity. The Romans themselves, the most powerful and enlightened nation of the globe, had renounced their ancient superstition; and, if the ruin of their empire seemed to accuse the efficacy of the new faith, the disgrace was already retrieved by the conversion of the victorious Goths. The valiant and fortunate barbarians, who subdued the provinces of the West, successively received, and reflected, the same edifying example. Before the age of Charlemagne, the christian nations of Europe might exult in the exclusive possession of the temperate climates, of the fertile lands, which produced

corn, wine, and oil; while the savage idolaters, and their helpless idols, were confined to the extremities of the earth, the dark and frozen regions of the North.[n]

Effects of their conversion.

Christianity, which opened the gates of Heaven to the barbarians, introduced an important change in their moral and political condition. They received, at the same time, the use of letters, so essential to a religion whose doctrines are contained in a sacred book, and while they studied the divine truth, their minds were insensibly enlarged by the distant view of history, of nature, of the arts, and of society. The version of the Scriptures into their native tongue, which had facilitated their conversion, must excite, among their clergy, some curiosity to read the original text, to understand the sacred liturgy of the church, and to examine, in the writings of the fathers, the chain of ecclesiastical tradition. These spiritual gifts were preserved in the Greek and Latin languages, which concealed the inestimable monuments of ancient learning. The immortal productions of Virgil, Cicero, and Livy, which were accessible to the christian barbarians, maintained a silent intercourse between the reign of Augustus, and the times of Clovis and Charlemagne. The emulation of mankind was encouraged by the remembrance of a more perfect state; and the flame of science was se-

[n] The sword of Charlemagne added weight to the argument; but when Daniel wrote this epistle (A. D. 723), the Mahometans, who reigned from India to Spain, might have retorted it against the Christians.

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cretly kept alive, to warm and enlighten the mature age of the western world. In the most corrupt state of Christianity, the barbarians might learn justice from the *law*, and mercy from the *gospel*; and if the knowledge of their duty was insufficient to guide their actions, or to regulate their passions, they were sometimes restrained by conscience, and frequently punished by remorse. But the direct authority of religion was less effectual, than the holy communion which united them with their christian brethren in spiritual friendship. The influence of these sentiments contributed to secure their fidelity in the service, or the alliance, of the Romans, to alleviate the horrors of war, to moderate the insolence of conquest, and to preserve, in the downfal of the empire, a permanent respect for the name and institutions of Rome. In the days of paganism, the priests of Gaul and Germany reigned over the people, and controuled the jurisdiction of the magistrates; and the zealous proselytes transferred an equal, or more ample, measure of devout obedience, to the pontiffs of the christian faith. The sacred character of the bishops was supported by their temporal possessions; they obtained an honourable seat in the legislative assemblies of soldiers and freemen; and it was their interest, as well as their duty, to mollify, by peaceful counsels, the fierce spirit of the barbarians. The perpetual correspondence of the Latin clergy, the frequent pilgrimages to Rome and Jerusalem, and the growing authority of the popes, cemented the union of the christian republic; and gradually

produced the similar manners, and common jurisprudence, which have distinguished, from the rest of mankind, the independent, and even hostile, nations of modern Europe.

They are involved in the Arian heresy.

But the operation of these causes was checked and retarded by the unfortunate accident, which infused a deadly poison into the cup of Salvation. Whatever might be the early sentiments of Ulphilas, his connections with the empire and the church were formed during the reign of Arianism. The apostle of the Goths subscribed the creed of Rimini; professed with freedom, and perhaps with sincerity, that the SON was not equal, or consubstantial, to the FATHER;[o] communicated these errors to the clergy and people; and infected the barbaric world with an heresy,[p] which the great Theodosius proscribed and extinguished among the Romans. The temper and understanding of the proselytes were not adapted to metaphysical subtleties; but they strenuously maintained, what they had piously received, as the pure and genuine doctrines of Christianity. The advantage of preaching and

[o] The opinions of Ulphilas and the Goths inclined to Semi-Arianism, since they would not say that the Son was a *creature*, though they held communion with those who maintained that heresy. Their apostle represented the whole controversy as a question of trifling moment, which had been raised by the passions of the clergy. Theodoret, l. iv, c. 37.

[p] The Arianism of the Goths has been imputed to the emperor Valens.—"Itaque justo Dei judicio ipsi eum vivum incenderunt, "qui propter eum etiam mortui, vitio erroris arsuri sunt." Orosius, l. vii, c. 33, p. 554. This cruel sentence is confirmed by Tillemont (Mem. Eccles. tom. vi, p. 604-610), who coolly observes, "un seul "homme entraina dans l'enfer un nombre infini de Septentrionaux," &c. Salvian (de Gubern. Dei, l. v, p. 150, 151) pities and excuses their involuntary error.

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expounding the Scriptures in the Teutonic language, promoted the apostolic labours of Ulphilas and his successors; and they ordained a competent number of bishops and presbyters, for the instruction of the kindred tribes. The Ostrogoths, the Burgundians, the Suevi, and the Vandals, who had listened to the eloquence of the Latin clergy,[q] preferred the more intelligible lessons of their domestic teachers; and Arianism was adopted as the national faith of the warlike converts, who were seated on the ruins of the western empire. This irreconcilable difference of religion was a perpetual source of jealousy and hatred; and the reproach of *barbarian* was embittered by the more odious epithet of *heretic*. The heroes of the North, who had submitted, with some reluctance, to believe that all their ancestors were in hell,[r] were astonished and exasperated to learn, that they themselves had only changed the mode of their eternal condemnation. Instead of the smooth applause, which christian kings are accustomed to expect from their loyal prelates, the orthodox bishops and their clergy were in a state of opposition to the Arian courts; and their indiscreet opposition frequently became criminal, and might sometimes be dangerous.[s] The pulpit,

[q] Orosius affirms, in the year 416, (l. 7, c. 41, p. 580), that the churches of Christ (of the catholics) were filled with Huns, Suevi, Vandals, Burgundians.

[r] Radbod, king of the Frisons, was so much scandalized by this rash declaration of a missionary, that he drew back his foot after he had entered the baptismal font. See Fleury Hist. Eccles. tom. ix, p. 167.

[s] The Epistles of Sidonius, bishop of Clermont, under the Visigoths, and of Avitus, bishop of Vienna, under the Burgundians,

that safe and sacred organ of sedition, resounded with the names of Pharoah and Holofernes;[t] the public discontent was inflamed by the hope or promise of a glorious deliverance; and the seditious saints were tempted to promote the accomplishment of their own predictions. Notwithstanding these provocations, the catholics of Gaul, Spain, and Italy, enjoyed, under the reign of the Arians, the free and peaceful exercise of their religion. Their haughty masters respected the zeal of a numerous people, resolved to die at the foot of their altars; and the example of their devout constancy was admired and imitated by the barbarians themselves. The conquerors evaded, however, the disgraceful reproach, or confession of fear, by attributing their toleration to the liberal motives of reason and humanity; and while they affected the language, they imperceptibly imbibed the spirit, of genuine Christianity.

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General toleration.

The peace of the church was sometimes interrupted. The catholics were indiscreet, the barbarians were impatient; and the partial acts of severity or injustice which had been recommended by the Arian clergy, were exaggerated by the orthodox writers. The guilt of persecution may be imputed to Euric, king of the Visigoths; who suspended the exercise of ecclesiastical, or, at least, of episcopal functions; and punished the

Arian persecution of the Vandals.

explain, sometimes in dark hints, the general dispositions of the catholics. The history of Clovis and Theodoric will suggest some particular facts.

[t] Genseric confessed the resemblance, by the severity with which he punished such indiscreet allusions. Victor Vitensis, 1, 7, p. 10.

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popular bishops of Aquitain with imprisonment, exile, and confiscation.[u] But the cruel and absurd enterprise of subduing the minds of a whole people, was undertaken by the Vandals alone.

Genseric, A. D. 429-477.

Genseric himself, in his early youth, had renounced the orthodox communion; and the apostate could neither grant, nor expect, a sincere forgiveness. He was exasperated to find, that the Africans, who had fled before him in the field, still presumed to dispute his will in synods and churches; and his ferocious mind was incapable of fear, or of compassion. His catholic subjects were oppressed by intolerant laws, and arbitrary punishments. The language of Genseric was furious and formidable; the knowledge of his intentions might justify the most unfavourable interpretation of his actions; and the Arians were reproached with the frequent executions, which stained the palace, and the dominions, of the tyrant. Arms and ambition were, however, the ruling passions of the

Hunneric, A. D. 477.

monarch of the sea. But Hunneric, his inglorious son, who seemed to inherit only his vices, tormented the catholics with the same unrelenting fury which had been fatal to his brother, his nephews, and the friends and favourites of his father; and, even to the Arian patriarch, who was inhumanly burnt alive in the midst of Carthage.

[u] Such are the contemporary complaints of Sidonius, bishop of Clermont (l. vii, c. 6, p, 182, &c. edit. Sirmond). Gregory of Tours, who quotes this Epistle (l. ii, c, 25, in tom. ii, p. 174), extorts an unwarrantable assertion, that of the nine vacancies in Aquitain, some had been produced by episcopal *martyrdoms*.

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The religious war was preceded and prepared by an insidious truce; persecution was made the serious and important business of the Vandal court; and the loathsome disease, which hastened the death of Hunneric, revenged the injuries, without contributing to the deliverance, of the church. The throne of Africa was successively filled by the two nephews of Hunneric; by Gundamund, who reigned about twelve, and by Thrasimund, who governed the nation above twenty-seven, years. Their administration was hostile and oppressive to the orthodox party. Gundamund appeared to emulate, or even to surpass, the cruelty of his uncle; and, if at length he relented, if he recalled the bishops, and restored the freedom of Athanasian worship, a premature death intercepted the benefits of his tardy clemency. His brother, Thrasimund, was the greatest and most accomplished of the Vandal kings, whom he excelled in beauty, prudence, and magnanimity of soul. But this magnanimous character was degraded by his intolerant zeal and deceitful clemency. Instead of threats and tortures, he employed the gentle, but efficacious, powers of seduction. Wealth, dignity, and the royal favour, were the liberal rewards of apostacy; the catholics, who had violated the laws, might purchase their pardon by the renunciation of their faith: and whenever Thrasimund meditated any rigorous measure, he patiently waited till the indiscretion of his adversaries furnished him with a specious opportunity. Bigotry was his last sentiment in the hour

Gundamund, A. D. 484.

Thrasimund, A. D. 496.

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of death; and he exacted from his successor a solemn oath, that he would never tolerate the sectaries of Athanasius. But his successor, Hilderic, the gentle son of the savage Hunneric, preferred the duties of humanity and justice, to the vain obligation of an impious oath; and his accession was gloriously marked by the restoration of peace and universal freedom. The throne of that virtuous, though feeble, monarch, was usurped by his cousin Gelimer, a zealous Arian; but the Vandal kingdom, before he could enjoy or abuse his power, was subverted by the arms of Belisarius; and the orthodox party retaliated the injuries which they had endured.[x]

Hilderic, A. D. 523.

Gelimer, A. D. 530.

A general view of the persecution in Africa.

The passionate declamations of the catholics, the sole historians of this persecution, cannot afford any distinct series of causes and events; any impartial view of characters, or counsels; but the most remarkable circumstances, that deserve either credit or notice, may be referred to the following heads.—1. In the original law, which is still extant,[y] Hunneric expressly declares, and

[x] The original monuments of the Vandal persecution are preserved in the five books of the history of Victor Vitensis (de Persecutione Vandalicâ), a bishop who was exiled by Hunneric; in the Life of St Fulgentius, who was distinguished in the persecution of Thrasimund (in Biblioth. Max. Patrum, tom. ix, p. 4–16), and in the first book of the Vandalic War, by the impartial Procopius (c. 7, 8, p. 196, 197, 198, 199). Dom. Ruinart, the last editor of Victor, has illustrated the whole subject with a copious and learned apparatus of notes and supplement. (Paris, 1694).

[y] Victor, iv. 2, p. 65. Hunneric refuses the name of catholics to the *Homoousians*. He describes, as the veri Divinæ Majestatis cultores, his own party, who professed the faith, confirmed by more than a thousand bishops, in the synods of Rimini and Seleucia.

the declaration appears to be correct, that he had faithfully transcribed the regulations and penalties of the imperial edicts, against the heretical congregations, the clergy, and the people, who dissented from the established religion. If the rights of conscience had been understood, the catholics must have condemned their past conduct, or acquiesced in their actual sufferings. But they still persisted to refuse the indulgence which they claimed. While they trembled under the lash of persecution, they praised the *laudable* severity of Hunneric himself, who burnt or banished great numbers of Manichæans;[z] and they rejected, with horror, the ignominious compromise, that the disciples of Arius, and of Athanasius, should enjoy a reciprocal and similar toleration in the territories of the Romans and in those of the Vandals.[a] II. The practice of a conference, which the catholics had so frequently used to insult and punish their obstinate antagonists, was retorted against themselves.[b] At the command of Hunneric, four hundred and sixty-six orthodox bishops assembled at Carthage; but when they were admit-

[z] Victor. ii. 1, p. 21, 22. *Laudabilior* ... videbatur. In the MSS. which omit this word, the passage is unintelligible. See Ruinart, Not. p. 164.

[a] Victor. ii. 2, p. 22, 23. The clergy of Carthage called these conditions *periculosæ*; and they seem, indeed, to have been proposed as a snare to entrap the catholic bishops.

[b] See the narrative of this conference, and the treatment of the bishops, in Victor. ii, 13-18, p. 35-42, and the whole fourth book, p. 63-171. The third book, p. 42-62, is entirely filled by their apology or confession of faith.

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ted into the hall of audience, they had the mortification of beholding the Arian Cirila exalted on the patriarchal throne. The disputants were separated after the mutual and ordinary reproaches of noise and silence, of delay and precipitation, of military force and of popular clamour. One martyr and one confessor were selected among the catholic bishops; twenty-eight escaped by flight, and eighty-eight by conformity; forty-six were sent into Corsica to cut timber for the royal navy; and three hundred and two were banished to the different parts of Africa, exposed to the insults of their enemies, and carefully deprived of all the temporal and spiritual comforts of life.[c] The hardships of ten years exile must have reduced their numbers; and if they had complied with the law of Thrasimund, which prohibited any episcopal consecrations, the orthodox church of Africa must have expired with the lives of its actual members. They disobeyed; and their disobedience was punished by a second exile of two hundred and twenty bishops into Sardinia; where they languished fifteen years, till the accession of the gracious Hilderic.[d] The two islands were judi-

[c] See the list of the African bishops, in Victor. p. 117-140, and Ruinart's notes, p. 215-397. The schismatic name of *Donatus* frequently occurs, and they appear to have adopted (like our fanatics of the last age) the pious appellations of *Deodatus, Deogratias, Quidvultdeus, Habetdeum*, &c.

[d] Fulgent. Vit. c. 16-29. Thrasimund affected the praise of moderation and learning; and Fulgentius addressed three books of controversy to the Arian tyrant, whom he styles *piissime Rex*. Biblioth.

ciously chosen by the malice of their Arian tyrants. Seneca, from his own experience, has deplored and exaggerated the miserable state of Corsica,[e] and the plenty of Sardinia was overbalanced by the unwholesome quality of the air.[f] CHAP. XXXVII.

III. The zeal of Genseric, and his successors, for the conversion of the catholics, must have rendered them still more jealous to guard the purity of the Vandal faith. Before the churches were finally shut, it was a crime to appear in a barbarian dress; and those who presumed to neglect the royal mandate, were rudely dragged backwards by their long hair.[g] The palatine officers, who refused to profess the religion of their prince, were ignominiously stripped of their honours and employments; banished to Sardinia and Sicily; or condemned to the servile labours of slaves and peasants in the fields of Utica. In the districts which had been peculiarly allotted to the Vandals, the exercise of the catholic worship was more strictly prohibited; and severe

Maxim. Patrum, tom. ix, p. 41. Only sixty bishops are mentioned as exiles in the life of Fulgentius; they are increased to one hundred and twenty, by Victor Tunnunensis, and Isidore; but the number of two hundred and twenty is specified in the *Historia Miscella*, and a short authentic chronicle of the times. See Ruinart, p. 570, 571.

[e] See the base and insipid epigrams of the Stoic, who could not support exile with more fortitude than Ovid. Corsica might not produce corn, wine, or oil; but it could not be destitute of grass, water, and even fire.

[f] Si ob gravitatem cœli interissent, *vile* damnum. Tacit. Annal. ii, 85. In this application, Thrasimund would have adopted the reading of some critics, *utile* damnum.

[g] See these preludes of a *general* persecution, in Victor. ii, 3, 4, 7, and the two edicts of Hunneric, l. ii, p. 35; l. iv, p. 64.

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penalties were denounced against the guilt, both of the missionary, and the proselyte. By these arts, the faith of the barbarians was preserved, and their zeal was inflamed; they discharged, with devout fury, the office of spies, informers, or executioners; and whenever their cavalry took the field, it was the favourite amusement of the march, to defile the churches, and to insult the clergy of the adverse faction.[h] IV. The citizens who had been educated in the luxury of the Roman province, were delivered, with exquisite cruelty, to the Moors of the desert. A venerable train of bishops, presbyters, and deacons, with a faithful crowd of four thousand and ninety-six persons, whose guilt is not precisely ascertained, were torn from their native homes, by the command of Hunneric. During the night, they were confined, like a herd of cattle, amidst their own ordure; during the day they pursued their march over the burning sands; and if they fainted under the heat and fatigue, they were goaded, or dragged along, till they expired in the hands of their tormentors.[i] These unhappy exiles, when they reached the Moorish huts, might excite the compassion of a people, whose native humanity was neither improved by reason, nor corrupted by fanaticism: but if they escaped the dangers, they were condemned to share the

[h] See Procopius de Bell. Vandal. l. i, c. 7, p. 197, 198. A Moorish prince endeavoured to propitiate the God of the Christians, by his diligence to erase the marks of the Vandal sacrilege.

[i] See this story in Victor. ii, 8-12, p. 30-34. Victor describes the distress of these confessors as an eye-witness.

distress, of a savage life. V. It is incumbent on the authors of persecution previously to reflect, whether they are determined to support it in the last extreme. They excite the flame which they strive to extinguish; and it soon becomes necessary to chastise the contumacy, as well as the crime, of the offender. The fine, which he is unable or unwilling to discharge, exposes his person to the severity of the law; and his contempt of lighter penalties suggests the use and propriety of capital punishment. Through the veil of fiction and declamation, we may clearly perceive, that the catholics, more especially under the reign of Hunneric, endured the most cruel and ignominious treatment.[k] Respectable citizens, noble matrons, and consecrated virgins, were stripped naked, and raised in the air by pulleys, with a weight suspended at their feet. In this painful attitude their naked bodies were torn with scourges, or burnt in the most tender parts with red-hot plates of iron. The amputation of the ears, the nose, the tongue, and the right hand, was inflicted by the Arians; and although the precise number cannot be defined, it is evident that many persons, among whom a bishop[l] and a proconsul[m] may be named, were

[k] See the fifth book of Victor. His passionate complaints are confirmed by the sober testimony of Procopius, and the public declaration of the emperor Justinian (Cod. l. i, tit. xxvii).

[l] Victor. ii, 18, p. 41.

[m] Victor. v, 4, p. 74, 75. His name was Victorianus, and he was a wealthy citizen of Adrumetum, who enjoyed the confidence of the king; by whose favour he had obtained the office, or at least the title, of Proconsul of Africa.

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entitled to the crown of martyrdom. The same honour has been ascribed to the memory of Count Sebastian, who professed the Nicene creed with unshaken constancy; and Genseric might detest, as an heretic, the brave and ambitious fugitive whom he dreaded as a rival.[n] VI. A new mode of conversion, which might subdue the feeble, and alarm the timorous, was employed by the Arian ministers. They imposed, by fraud or violence, the rites of baptism; and punished the apostacy of the catholics, if they disclaimed this odious and profane ceremony, which scandalously violated the freedom of the will, and the unity of the sacrament.[o] The hostile sects had formerly allowed the validity of each other's baptism; and the innovation, so fiercely maintained by the Vandals, can be imputed only to the example and advice of the Donatists. VII. The Arian clergy surpassed, in religious cruelty, the king and his Vandals; but they were incapable of cultivating the spiritual vineyard, which they were so desirous to possess. A patriarch[p] might seat himself on the throne of Carthage; some bishops, in the principal cities, might usurp the place of their rivals; but

[n] Victor. i, 6, p. 8, 9. After relating the firm resistance and dexterous reply of Count Sebastian, he adds, quare alio generis argumento postea bellicosum virum occidit.

[o] Victor. v, 12, 13. Tillemont, Mem. Eccles. tom. vi, p. 609.

[p] *Primate* was more properly the title of the bishop of Carthage; but the name of *patriarch* was given by the sects and nations to their principal ecclesiastic. See Thomassin, Discipline de l'Eglise, tom. i, p. 155, 158.

the smallness of their numbers, and their ignorance of the Latin language,[q] disqualified the barbarians for the ecclesiastical ministry of a great church; and the Africans, after the loss of their orthodox pastors, were deprived of the public exercise of Christianity. VIII. The emperors were the natural protectors of the Homoousian doctrine: and the faithful people of Africa, both as Romans and as catholics, preferred their lawful sovereignty to the usurpation of the barbarous heretics. During an interval of peace and friendship, Hunneric restored the cathedral of Carthage; at the intercession of Zeno, who reigned in the East, and of Placidia, the daughter and relict of emperors, and the sister of the queen of the Vandals.[r] But this decent regard was but of short duration; and the haughty tyrant displayed his contempt for the religion of the empire, by studiously arranging the bloody images of persecution, in all the principal streets through which the Roman ambassador must pass in his way to the palace.[s] An oath was requested from the bishops, who were assembled at Carthage, that they would support the succession of his son Hilderic, and

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[q] The patriarch Cyrila himself publicly declared, that he did not understand Latin (Victor. ii, 18, p. 42); Nescio Latine; and he might converse with tolerable ease, without being capable of disputing or preaching in that language. His Vandal clergy were still more ignorant; and small confidence could be placed in the Africans, who had conformed.

[r] Victor. ii, 1, 2, p. 22.

[s] Victor. v, 7, p. 77. He appeals to the ambassador himself, whose name was Uranius.

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that they would renounce all foreign or *transmarine* correspondence. This engagement, consistent as it should seem with their moral and religious duties, was refused by the more sagacious members[t] of the assembly. Their refusal, faintly coloured by the pretence that it is unlawful for a Christian to swear, must provoke the suspicions of a jealous tyrant.

Catholic frauds,

The catholics, oppressed by royal and military force, were far superior to their adversaries in numbers and learning. With the same weapons which the Greek[u] and Latin fathers had already provided for the Arian controversy, they repeatedly silenced, or vanquished, the fierce and illiterate successors of Ulphilas. The consciousness of their own superiority might have raised them above the arts, and passions, of religious warfare. Yet, instead of assuming such honourable pride, the orthodox theologians were tempted, by the assurance of impunity, to compose fictions, which must be stigmatized with the epithets of fraud and forgery. They ascribed their own polemical works to the most venerable names of christian antiquity; the characters of Athanasius

[t] *Astutiores*, Victor. iv, 4. p. 70. He plainly intimates that their quotation of the Gospel, "Non jurabitis in toto," was only meant to elude the obligation of an inconvenient oath. The forty-six bishops who refused were banished to Corsica; the three hundred and two who swore, were distributed through the provinces of Africa.

[u] Fulgentius, bishop of Ruspæ, in the Byzacene province, was of a senatorial family, and had received a liberal education. He could repeat all Homer and Menander before he was allowed to study Latin, his native tongue (Vit. Fulgent. c. 1). Many African bishops might understand Greek, and many Greek theologians were translated into Latin.

and Augustin were awkwardly personated by Vigilius and his disciples;[x] and the famous creed, which so clearly expounds the mysteries of the Trinity and the Incarnation, is deduced, with strong probability, from this African school.[y] Even the Scriptures themselves were profaned by their rash and sacrilegious hands. The memorable text, which asserts the unity of the THREE who bear witness in Heaven,[z] is condemned by the universal silence of the orthodox fathers, ancient versions, and authentic manuscripts.[a]

hapsus

[x] Compare the two prefaces to the Dialogue of Vigilius of T (p. 118, 119, edit. Chiflet). He might amuse his learned reader with an innocent fiction; but the subject was too grave, and the Africans were too ignorant.

[y] The P. Quesnel started this opinion, which has been favourably received. But the three following truths, however surprising they may seem, are *now* universally acknowledged (Gerard Vossius, tom. vi, p. 516-522. Tillemont, Mem. Eccles. tom. viii, p. 667-671). 1. St Athanasius is not the author of the creed, which is so frequently read in our churches. 2. It does not appear to have existed, within a century after his death. 3. It was originally composed in the Latin tongue, and, consequently, in the western provinces. Gennadius, patriarch of Constantinople, was so much amazed by this extraordinary composition, that he frankly pronounced it to be the work of a drunken man. Petav. Dogmat. Theologica, tom. ii, l. vii, c. 8, p. 68.

[z] 1 John, v. 7. See Simon, Hist. Critique du Nouveau Testament, part i, c. xviii, p. 203-218; and part ii, c. ix, p. 99-121: and the elaborate Prolegomena and Annotations of Dr Mill and Wetstein to their editions of the Greek Testament. In 1689, the papist Simon strove to be free; in 1707, the protestant Mill wished to be a slave; in 1751, the Armenian Wetstein used the liberty of his times, and of his sect.

[a] Of *all* the MSS. now extant, above fourscore in number, some of which are more than 1200 years old (Wetstein ad loc.) the *orthodox* copies of the Vatican, of the Complutensian editors of Robert Stephens, are become invisible; and the *two* MSS. of Dublin and Berlin

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It was first alleged by the catholic bishops whom Hunneric summoned to the conference of Carthage.[b] An allegorical interpretation, in the form, perhaps, of a marginal note, invaded the text of the Latin bibles, which were renewed and corrected in a dark period of ten centuries.[c] After the invention of printing,[d] the editors of the Greek Testament yielded to their own prejudices, or to those of the times;[e] and the pious fraud, which was embraced with equal zeal at Rome and at Geneva, has been infinitely mul-

are unworthy to form an exception. See Emlyn's Works, vol. ii, p. 227-255, 269-299; and M. de Missy's four ingenious letters, in tom. viii and ix of the Journal Britannique.

[b] Or, more properly, by the *four* bishops who composed and published the profession of faith in the name of their brethren. They style this text, luce clarius (Victor Vitensis de Persecut. Vandal. l. iii, c. 11, p. 54). It is quoted soon afterwards by the African polemics, Virgilius and Fulgentius.

[c] In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the bibles were corrected by Lanfranc, archbishop of Canterbury, and by Nicolas, a cardinal and librarian of the Roman church, secundum orthodoxam fidem (Wetstein, Prolegom. p. 84, 85). Notwithstanding these corrections, the passage is still wanting in twenty-five Latin MSS. (Wetstein ad loc.), the oldest and the fairest; two qualities seldom united, except in manuscripts.

[d] The art which the Germans had invented was applied in Italy to the profane writers of Rome and Greece. The original Greek of the New Testament was published about the same time (A. D. 1514, 1516, 1520) by the industry of Erasmus, and the munificence of Cardinal Ximenes. The Complutensian Polyglot cost the cardinal 50,000 ducats. See Mattaire Annal. Typograph. tom. ii, p. 2-8, 125-133; and Wetstein, Prolegomena, p. 116-127.

[e] The three witnesses have been established in our Greek Testaments by the prudence of Erasmus; the honest bigotry of the Complutensian editors; the typographical fraud, or error, of Robert Stephens in the placing a crotchet; and the deliberate falsehood, or strange misapprehension, of Theodore Beza.

tiplied in every country and every language of modern Europe. CHAP. XXXVII.

The example of fraud must excite suspicion: and the specious miracles by which the African catholics have defended the truth and justice of their cause, may be ascribed, with more reason, to their own industry, than to the visible protection of Heaven. Yet the historian, who views this religious conflict with an impartial eye, may condescend to mention *one* preternatural event, which will edify the devout, and surprise the incredulous. Tipasa,[f] a maritime colony of Mauritania, sixteen miles to the east of Cæsarea, had been distinguished in every age, by the orthodox zeal of its inhabitants. They had braved the fury of the Donatists;[g] they resisted, or eluded, the tyranny of the Arians. The town was deserted on the approach of an heretical bishop: most of the inhabitants who could procure ships passed over to the coast of Spain; and the unhappy remnant, refusing all communion with the usurper, still presumed to hold their pious, but illegal, assemblies. Their disobedience exasperated the cruelty of Hunneric. A military count was dispatched from Carthage to Tipasa: he collected the catholics in the Forum, and, in the presence of the whole province, deprived the and miracles.

[f] Plin. Hist. Natural. v, 1. Itinerar. Wesseling, p. 15. Cellarius, Geograph. Antiq. tom. ii, part ii, p. 127. This Tipasa (which must not be confounded with another in Numidia) was a town of some note, since Vespasian endowed it with a right of Latium.

[g] Optatus Milevitanus de Schism. Donatist. l. ii, p. 38.

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guilty of their right hands and their tongues. But the holy confessors continued to speak without tongues; and this miracle is attested by Victor, an African bishop, who published an history of the persecution within two years after the event.[h] "If any one," says Victor, "should "doubt of the truth, let him repair to Constan- "tinople, and listen to the clear and perfect "language of Restitutus, the sub-deacon, one "of these glorious sufferers, who is now lodged "in the palace of the emperor Zeno, and is re- "spected by the devout empress." At Constantinople we are astonished to find a cool, a learned, and unexceptionable witness, without interest, and without passion. Æneas of Gaza, a Platonic philosopher, has accurately described his own observations on these African sufferers. "I saw them myself: I heard them speak: I "diligently enquired by what means such an ar- "ticulate voice could be formed without any "organ of speech: I used my eyes to examine "the report of my ears: I opened their mouth, "and saw that the whole tongue had been com- "pletely torn away by the roots; an operation "which the physicians generally suppose to be "mortal."[i] The testimony of Æneas of Gaza

[h] Victor Vitensis, v, 6, p. 76. Ruinart, p. 483-487.

[i] Æneas Gazæus in Theophrasto, in Biblioth. Patrum, tom. viii, p. 664, 665. He was a Christian, and composed this Dialogue (the Theophrastus) on the immortality of the soul, and the resurrection of the body; besides twenty-five Epistles, still extant. See Cave (Hist. Litteraria, p. 297), and Fabricius (Bibl. Græc. tom. i, p. 422).

might be confirmed by the superfluous evidence of the emperor Justinian, in a perpetual edict; of Count Marcellinus, in his Chronicle of the times; and of Pope Gregory I, who had resided at Constantinople, as the minister of the Roman pontiff.[k] They all lived within the compass of a century; and they all appeal to their personal knowledge, or the public notoriety, for the truth of a miracle, which was repeated in several instances, displayed on the greatest theatre of the world, and submitted, during a series of years, to the calm examination of the senses. This supernatural gift of the African confessors, who spoke without tongues, will command the assent of those, and of those only, who already believe that their language was pure and orthodox. But the stubborn mind of an infidel is guarded by secret, incurable, suspicion; and the Arian, or Socinian, who has seriously rejected the doctrine of the Trinity, will not be shaken by the most plausible evidence of an Athanasian miracle.

The Vandals and the Ostrogoths persevered in the profession of Arianism till the final ruin of the kingdoms which they had founded in Africa and Italy. The barbarians of Gaul submitted

The ruin of Arianism, among the barbarians, A. D. 500-700.

[k] Justinian. Codex, l. i, tit. xxvii. Marcellin. in Chron. p. 45, in Thesaur. Temporum. Scaliger. Procopius, de Bell. Vandal. l. i, c. 7, p. 196. Gregor. Magnus Dialog. iii, 32. None of these witnesses have specified the number of the confessors, which is fixed at sixty in an old menology (apud Ruinart, p. 486). Two of them lost their speech by fornication; but the miracle is enhanced by the singular instance of a boy who had *never* spoken before his tongue was cut out.

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to the orthodox dominion of the Franks; and Spain was restored to the catholic church by the voluntary conversion of the Visigoths.

Revolt and martyrdom of Hermenegild in Spain, A. D. 577-584.

This salutary revolution[l] was hastened by the example of a royal martyr, whom our calmer reason may style an ungrateful rebel. Leovigild, the Gothic monarch of Spain, deserved the respect of his enemies, and the love of his subjects; the catholics enjoyed a free toleration, and his Arian synods attempted, without much success, to reconcile their scruples by abolishing the unpopular rite of a *second* baptism. His eldest son Hermenegild, who was invested by his father with the royal diadem, and the fair principality of Bœtica, contracted an honourable and orthodox alliance with a Merovingian princess, the daughter of Sigibert, king of Austrasia, and of the famous Brunechild. The beauteous Ingundis, who was no more than thirteen years of age, was received, beloved, and persecuted in the Arian court of Toledo; and her religious constancy was alternately assaulted with blandishments and violence by Goisvintha, the Gothic queen, who abused the double claim of maternal authority.[m] Incensed by her resistance, Gois-

[l] See the two general historians of Spain, Mariana (Hist. de Rebus Hispaniæ, tom. i, l. v, c. 12-15, p. 182-194), and Ferreras (French translation, tom. ii, p. 206-247). Mariana almost forgets that he is a Jesuit, to assume the style and spirit of a Roman classic. Ferreras, an industrious compiler, reviews his facts, and rectifies his chronology.

[m] Goisvintha successively married two kings of the Visigoths; Athanigild, to whom she bore Brunechild, the mother of Ingundis

vintha seized the catholic princess by her long hair, inhumanly dashed her against the ground, kicked her till she was covered with blood, and at last gave orders that she should be stripped, and thrown into a bason or fish-pond.[n] Love and honour might excite Hermenegild to resent this injurious treatment of his bride; and he was gradually persuaded that Ingundis suffered for the cause of divine truth. Her tender complaints, and the weighty arguments of Leander, archbishop of Seville, accomplished his conversion; and the heir of the Gothic monarchy was initiated in the Nicene faith by the solemn rites of confirmation.[o] The rash youth, inflamed by zeal, and perhaps by ambition, was tempted to violate the duties of a son, and a subject; and the catholics of Spain, although they could not complain of persecution, applauded his pious rebellion against an heretical father. The civil war was protracted by the long and obstinate sieges of Merida, Cordova, and Seville, which had strenuously espoused the party of Hermenegild. He invited the orthodox barbarians, the

and Leovigild, whose two sons, Hermenegild and Recared, were the issue of a former marriage.

[n] Iracundiæ furore succensa, adprehensam per comam capitis puellam in terram conlidit, et diu calcibus verberatam, ac sanguine cruentatam, jussit expoliari, et piscinæ immergi. Greg. Turon. l. v, c. 39, in tom. ii, p. 255. Gregory is one of our best originals for this portion of history.

[o] The catholics who admitted the baptism of heretics, repeated the rite, or, as it was afterwards styled, the sacrament of confirmation, to which they ascribed many mystic and marvellous prerogatives, both visible and invisible. See Chardon, Hist. des Sacremens, tom. i, p. 405-552.

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Suevi, and the Franks, to the destruction of his native land: he solicited the dangerous aid of the Romans, who possessed Africa, and a part of the Spanish coast; and his holy ambassador, the archbishop Leander, effectually negotiated in person with the Byzantine court. But the hopes of the catholics were crushed by the active diligence of a monarch who commanded the troops and treasures of Spain; and the guilty Hermenegild, after his vain attempts to resist or to escape, was compelled to surrender himself into the hands of an incensed father. Leovigild was still mindful of that sacred character; and the rebel, despoiled of the regal ornaments, was still permitted, in a decent exile, to profess the catholic religion. His repeated and unsuccessful treasons at length provoked the indignation of the Gothic king; and the sentence of death, which he pronounced with apparent reluctance, was privately executed in the tower of Seville. The inflexible constancy with which he refused to accept the Arian communion, as the price of his safety, may excuse the honours that have been paid to the memory of St Hermenegild. His wife and infant son were detained by the Romans in ignominious captivity: and this domestic misfortune tarnished the glories of Leovigild, and embittered the last moments of his life.

Conversion of Recared and the Visigoths of Spain, A. D. 586-589.

His son and successor, Recared, the first catholic king of Spain, had imbibed the faith of his unfortunate brother, which he supported with more prudence and success. Instead of revolting

against his father, Recared patiently expected the hour of his death. Instead of condemning his memory, he piously supposed, that the dying monarch had abjured the errors of Arianism, and recommended to his son the conversion of the Gothic nation. To accomplish that salutary end, Recared convened an assembly of the Arian clergy and nobles, declared himself a catholic, and exhorted them to imitate the example of their prince. The laborious interpretation of doubtful texts, or the curious pursuit of metaphysical arguments, would have excited an endless controversy; and the monarch discreetly proposed to his illiterate audience two substantial and visible arguments, the testimony of Earth, and of Heaven. The *Earth* had submitted to the Nicene synod: the Romans, the barbarians, and the inhabitants of Spain, unanimously professed the same orthodox creed; and the Visigoths resisted, almost alone, the consent of the christian world. A superstitious age was prepared to reverence, as the testimony of *Heaven*, the preternatural cures, which were performed by the skill or virtue of the catholic clergy, the baptismal fonts of Osset in Bœtica,[p] which were spon-

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[p] Osset or Julia Constantia, was opposite to Seville, on the northern side of the Bœtis (Plin. Hist. Natur. iii, 3): and the authentic reference of Gregory of Tours (Hist. Francor. l. vi, c. 43, p. 288) deserves more credit than the name of Lusitania (de Gloria Martyr. c. 24), which has been eagerly embraced by the vain and superstitious Portuguese (Ferreras, Hist. d'Espagne, tom. ii, p. 166).

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tancously replenished each year, on the vigil of Easter;[q] and the miraculous shrine of St Martin of Tours, which had already converted the Suevic prince and people of Gallicia.[r] The catholic king encountered some difficulties on this important change of the national religion. A conspiracy, secretly fomented by the queen-dowager, was formed against his life; and two counts excited a dangerous revolt in the Narbonnese Gaul. But Recared disarmed the conspirators, defeated the rebels, and executed severe justice; which the Arians, in their turn, might brand with the reproach of persecution. Eight bishops, whose names betray their barbaric origin, abjured their errors; and all the books of Arian theology were reduced to ashes, with the house in which they had been purposely collected. The whole body of the Visigoths and Suevi were allured or driven into the pale of the catholic communion; the faith, at least of the rising generation, was fervent and sincere; and the devout liberality of the barbarians enriched the churches and monasteries of Spain. Seventy bishops, assembled in the council of Toledo, received the submission of their conquerors; and the zeal of the Spaniards improved the Nicene creed, by declaring the pro-

[q] This miracle was skilfully performed. An Arian king sealed the doors, and dug a deep trench round the church, without being able to intercept the Easter supply of baptismal water.

[r] Ferreras (tom. ii, p. 163-175, A. D. 550) has illustrated the difficulties which regard the time and circumstances of the conversion of the Suevi. They had been recently united by Leovigild to the Gothic monarchy of Spain.

cession of the Holy Ghost, from the Son, as well as from the Father; a weighty point of doctrine, which produced, long afterwards, the schism of the Greek and Latin churches.[s] The royal proselyte immediately saluted and consulted Pope Gregory, surnamed the Great, a learned and holy prelate, whose reign was distinguished by the conversion of heretics and infidels. The ambassadors of Recared respectfully offered on the threshold of the Vatican his rich presents of gold and gems: they accepted, as a lucrative exchange, the hairs of St John the Baptist; a cross, which inclosed a small piece of the true wood; and a key, that contained some particles of iron which had been scraped from the chains of St Peter.[t]

Conversion of the Lombards of Italy, A. D. 600, &c.

The same Gregory, the spiritual conqueror of Britain, encouraged the pious Theodelinda, queen of the Lombards, to propagate the Nicene faith among the victorious savages, whose recent Christianity was polluted by the Arian heresy. Her devout labours still left room for the industry and success of future missionaries; and many cities of Italy were still disputed by hostile bishops. But the cause of Arianism was gradually suppressed by the weight of truth, of interest, and of example; and the controversy, which Egypt had derived from the Platonic

[s] This addition to the Nicene, or rather the Constantinopolitan, creed, was first made in the eighth council of Toledo, A. D. 655; but it was expressive of the popular doctrine (Gerard Vossius, tom. vi, p. 527, de tribus Symbolis).

[t] See Gregor. Magn. l. vii, epist. 126, apud Baronium. Annal. Eccles. A. D. 599, N°. 25, 26.

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school, was terminated, after a war of three hundred years, by the final conversion of the Lombards of Italy.[u]

Persecution of the Jews in Spain, A. D. 612-712

The first missionaries who preached the gospel to the barbarians, appealed to the evidence of reason, and claimed the benefit of toleration.[x] But no sooner had they established their spiritual dominion, than they exhorted the christian kings to extirpate, without mercy, the remains of Roman or barbaric superstition. The successors of Clovis inflicted one hundred lashes on the peasants who refused to destroy their idols; the crime of sacrificing to the demons was punished by the Anglo-Saxon laws, with the heavier penalties of imprisonment and confiscation; and even the wise Alfred adopted, as an indispensable duty, the extreme rigour of the Mosaic institutions.[y] But the punishment, and the crime, were gradually abolished among a christian people: the theological disputes of the schools were suspended by propitious ignorance; and the intolerant spirit, which could find neither idolaters nor heretics, was reduced to the

[u] Paul Warnefrid (de Gestis Langobard. l. iv, c. 44, p. 853, edit. Grot.) allows that Arianism still prevailed under the reign of Rotharis (A. D. 636-652). The pious *Deacon* does not attempt to mark the precise era of the national conversion, which was accomplished, however, before the end of the seventh century.

[x] Quorum fidei et conversioni ita congratulatus esse rex perhibetur, ut nullum tamen cogeret ad Christianismum . . . . Didicerat enim a doctoribus auctoribusque suæ salutis, servitium Christi voluntarium non coactitium esse debere. Bedæ Hist. Ecclesiastic. l. i, c. 26, p. 62, edit. Smith.

[y] See the Historians of France, tom. iv, p. 114; and Wilkins, Leges Anglo-Saxonicæ, p. .31. Si quis sacrificium immolaverit præter Deo soli morte moriatur.

persecution of the Jews. That exiled nation had founded some synagogues in the cities of Gaul; but Spain, since the time of Hadrian, was filled with their numerous colonies.[z] The wealth which they accumulated by trade, and the management of the finances, invited the pious avarice of their masters; and they might be oppressed without danger, as they had lost the use, and even the remembrance, of arms. Sisebut, a Gothic king, who reigned in the beginning of the seventh century, proceeded at once to the last extremes of persecution.[a] Ninety thousand Jews were compelled to receive the sacrament of baptism; the fortunes of the obstinate infidels were confiscated, their bodies were tortured; and it seems doubtful whether they were permitted to abandon their native country. The excessive zeal of the catholic king was moderated, even by the clergy of Spain, who solemnly pronounced an inconsistent sentence: *that* the sacraments should not be forcibly imposed; but *that* the Jews who had been baptized should be constrained, for the honour of the church, to persevere in the external practice of a religion which they disbelieved and de-

[z] The Jews pretend that they were introduced into Spain by the fleets of Solomon, and the arms of Nebuchadnezzar; that Hadrian transported forty thousand families of the tribe of Judah, and ten thousand of the tribe of Benjamin, &c. Basnage, Hist. des Juifs, tom. vii, c. 9, p. 240-256.

[a] Isidore, at that time archbishop of Seville, mentions, disapproves, and congratulates, the zeal of Sisebut (Chron. Goth. p. 728). Baronius (A. D. 614, N°. 41) assigns the number on the evidence of Aimoin (l. iv, c. 22): but the evidence is weak, and I have not been able to verify the quotation (Historians of France, tom. iii, p. 127).

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tested. Their frequent relapses provoked one of the successors of Sisebut to banish the whole nation from his dominions; and a council of Toledo published a decree, that every Gothic king should swear to maintain this salutary edict. But the tyrants were unwilling to dismiss the victims, whom they delighted to torture, or to deprive themselves of the industrious slaves, over whom they might exercise a lucrative oppression. The Jews still continued in Spain, under the weight of the civil and ecclesiastical laws, which in the same country have been faithfully transcribed in the Code of the Inquisition. The Gothic kings and bishops at length discovered, that injuries will produce hatred, and that hatred will find the opportunity of revenge. A nation, the secret or professed enemies of Christianity, still multiplied in servitude, and distress; and the intrigues of the Jews promoted the rapid success of the Arabian conquerors.[b]

Conclusion.

As soon as the barbarians withdrew their powerful support, the unpopular heresy of Arius sunk into contempt and oblivion. But the Greeks still retained their subtle and loquacious disposition: the establishment of an obscure doctrine suggested new questions, and new disputes; and it was always in the power of an ambitious prelate, or a fanatic monk, to violate the peace of

[b] Basnage (tom. viii, c. 13, p. 388-400) faithfully represents the state of the Jews: but he might have added from the canons of the Spanish councils, and the laws of the Visigoths, many curious circumstances, essential to his subject, though they are foreign to mine.

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the church, and, perhaps, of the empire. The historian of the empire may overlook those disputes which were confined to the obscurity of schools and synods. The Manichæans, who laboured to reconcile the religions of Christ and of Zoroaster, had secretly introduced themselves into the provinces: but these foreign sectaries were involved in the common disgrace of the Gnostics, and the imperial laws were executed by the public hatred. The rational opinions of the Pelagians were propagated from Britain to Rome, Africa, and Palestine, and silently expired in a superstitious age. But the East was distracted by the Nestorian and Eutychian controversies; which attempted to explain the mystery of the incarnation, and hastened the ruin of Christianity in her native land. These controversies were first agitated under the reign of the younger Theodosius: but their important consequences extend far beyond the limits of the present volume. The metaphysical chain of argument, the contest of ecclesiastical ambition, and their political influence on the decline of the Byzantine empire, may afford an interesting and instructive series of history, from the general councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon, to the conquest of the East by the successors of Mahomet.

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Reign and conversion of Clovis—His victories over the Alemanni, Burgundians, and Visigoths—Establishment of the French monarchy in Gaul—Laws of the barbarians—State of the Romans—The Visigoths of Spain—Conquest of Britain by the Saxons.

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The revolution of Gaul.

THE Gauls,[a] who impatiently supported the Roman yoke, received a memorable lesson from one of the lieutenants of Vespasian, whose weighty sense has been refined and expressed by the genius of Tacitus.[b] "The protection "of the republic has delivered Gaul from inter- "nal discord and foreign invasions. By the "loss of national independence, you have acqui- "red the name and privileges of Roman citizens. "You enjoy, in common with ourselves, the "permanent benefits of civil government; and "your remote situation is less exposed to the "accidental mischiefs of tyranny. Instead of

[a] In this chapter I shall draw my quotations from the Recueil des Historiens des Gaules et de la France, Paris, 1738-1767, in eleven volumes in folio. By the labour of Dom. Bouquet, and the other Benedictines, all the original testimonies, as far as A. D. 1060, are disposed in chronological order, and illustrated with learned notes. Such a national work, which will be continued to the year 1500, might provoke our emulation.

[b] Tacit. Hist. iv, 73, 74, in tom. i, p. 415. To abridge Tacitus, would indeed be presumptuous: but I may select the general ideas which he applies to the present state and future revolutions of Gaul.

" exercising the rights of conquest, we have been " contented to impose such tributes as are requi- " site for your own preservation. Peace cannot " be secured without armies; and armies must " be supported at the expense of the people. " It is for your sake, not for our own, that we " guard the barrier of the Rhine against the fe- " rocious Germans, who have so often attempt- " ed, and who will always desire, to exchange " the solitude of their woods and morasses for " the wealth and fertility of Gaul. The fall of " Rome would be fatal to the provinces; and " you would be buried in the ruins of that mighty " fabric, which has been raised by the valour and " wisdom of eight hundred years. Your imagi- " nary freedom would be insulted and oppressed " by a savage master; and the expulsion of the " Romans would be succeeded by the eternal " hostilities of the barbarian conquerors."[c] This salutary advice was accepted, and this strange prediction was accomplished. In the space of four hundred years, the hardy Gauls, who had encountered the arms of Cæsar, were imperceptibly melted into the general mass of citizens and subjects; the western empire was dissolved; and the Germans, who had passed the Rhine, fiercely contended for the possession of Gaul, and excited the contempt, or abhorrence, of its peaceful and polished inhabitants. With that conscious

[c] Eadem semper causa Germanis transcendendi in Gallias libido atque avaritiæ et mutandæ sedis amor; ut relictis paludibus et solitudinibus suis, fecundissimum hoc solum vosque ipsos possiderent. . . . Nam pulsis Romanis quid aliud quam bella omnium inter segentium exsistent?

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pride which the pre-eminence of knowledge and luxury seldom fails to inspire, they derided the hairy and gigantic savages of the North; their rustic manners, dissonant joy, voracious appetite, and their horrid appearance, equally disgusting to the sight and to the smell. The liberal studies were still cultivated in the schools of Autun and Bordeaux; and the language of Cicero and Virgil was familiar to the Gallic youth. Their ears were astonished by the harsh and unknown sounds of the Germanic dialect, and they ingeniously lamented that the trembling muses fled from the harmony of a Burgundian lyre. The Gauls were endowed with all the advantages of art and nature; but as they wanted courage to defend them, they were justly condemned to obey, and even to flatter, the victorious barbarians, by whose clemency they held their precarious fortunes and their lives.[d]

Euric, king of the Visigoths, A. D. 476-485

As soon as Odoacer had extinguished the western empire, he sought the friendship of the most powerful of the barbarians. The new sovereign of Italy resigned to Euric, king of the Visigoths, all the Roman conquests beyond the Alps, as far as the Rhine and the Ocean:[e] and the senate might confirm this liberal gift with some ostentation of power, and without any real loss of re-

[d] Sidonius Apollinaris ridicules, with affected wit and pleasantry, the hardships of his situation (Carm. xii, in tom. i, p. 811).

[e] See Procopius de Bell. Gothico, l. i, c. 12, in tom. ii, p. 31. The character of Grotius inclines me to believe, that he has not substituted the *Rhine* for the *Rhone* (Hist. Gothorum, p. 175), without the authority of some MS.

venue or dominion. The lawful pretensions of Euric were justified by ambition and success; and the Gothic nation might aspire, under his command, to the monarchy of Spain and Gaul. Arles and Marseilles surrendered to his arms; he oppressed the freedom of Auvergne; and the bishop condescended to purchase his recal from exile by a tribute of just, but reluctant, praise. Sidonius waited before the gates of the palace among a crowd of ambassadors and suppliants; and their various business at the court of Bordeaux attested the power, and the renown, of the king of the Visigoths. The Heruli of the distant ocean, who painted their naked bodies with its cerulean colour, implored his protection; and the Saxons respected the maritime provinces of a prince, who was destitute of any naval force. The tall Burgundians submitted to his authority; nor did he restore the captive Franks, till he had imposed on that fierce nation the terms of an unequal peace. The Vandals of Africa cultivated his useful friendship; and the Ostrogoths of Pannonia were supported by his powerful aid against the oppression of the neighbouring Huns. The North (such are the lofty strains of the poet) was agitated, or appeased, by the nod of Euric; the great king of Persia consulted the oracle of the West; and the aged god of the Tiber was protected by the swelling genius of the Garonne.[f] The fortune of nations has often

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[f] Sidonius, l. viii, epist. 3, 9, in tom. i, p. 800. Jornandes (de Rebus Geticis, c. 47, p. 680) justifies, in some measure, this portrait of the Gothic hero.

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depended on accidents; and France may ascribe her greatness to the premature death of the Gothic king, at a time when his son Alaric was an helpless infant, and his adversary Clovis[g] an ambitious and valiant youth.

Clovis, king of the Franks, A. D. 481-511.

While Childeric, the father of Clovis, lived an exile in Germany, he was hospitably entertained by the queen, as well as by the king, of the Thuringians. After his restoration, Basina escaped from her husband's bed to the arms of her lover; freely declaring, that if she had known a man wiser, stronger, or more beautiful, than Childeric, that man should have been the object of her preference.[h] Clovis was the offspring of this voluntary union; and, when he was no more than fifteen years of age, he succeeded, by his father's death, to the command of the Salian tribe. The narrow limits of his kingdom[i] were confined to the island of the Batavians, with the ancient dioceses of Tournay and Arras;[k] and

[g] I use the familiar appellation of *Clovis*, from the Latin *Chlodovechus*, or *Chlodovæus*. But the *Ch* expresses only the German aspiration; and the true name is not different from *Ludwin*, or *Lewis* (Mem. de l'Academie des Inscriptions, tom. xx, p. 68).

[h] Greg. Turon. l. ii, c. 12, in tom. i, p. 168. Basina speaks the language of nature: the Franks, who had seen her in their youth, might converse with Gregory in their old age; and the bishop of Tours could not wish to defame the mother of the first christian king.

[i] The Abbé Dubos (Hist. Critique de l'Etablissement de la Monarchie Françoise dans les Gaules, tom. i, p. 630-650) has the merit of defining the primitive kingdom of Clovis, and of ascertaining the genuine number of his subjects.

[k] Ecclesiam incultam ac negligentiâ civium paganorum prætermissam, veprium desitate oppletam, &c. Vit. St. Vedasti, in tom. iii, p. 372. This description supposes that Arras was possessed by the pagans, many years before the baptism of Clovis.

at the baptism of Clovis, the number of his warriors could not exceed five thousand. The kindred tribes of the Franks, who had seated themselves along the Belgic rivers, the Scheld, the Meuse, the Moselle, and the Rhine, were governed by their independent kings, of the Merovingian race; the equals, the allies, and sometimes the enemies, of the Salic prince. But the Germans, who obeyed, in peace, the hereditary jurisdiction of their chiefs, were free to follow the standard of a popular and victorious general; and the superior merit of Clovis attracted the respect and allegiance of the national confederacy. When he first took the field, he had neither gold and silver in his coffers, nor wine and corn in his magazines:[l] but he imitated the example of Cæsar, who, in the same country, had acquired wealth by the sword, and purchased soldiers with the fruits of conquest. After each successful battle or expedition, the spoils were accumulated in one common mass; every warrior received his proportionable share, and the royal prerogative submitted to the equal regulations of military law. The untamed spirit of the barbarians was taught to acknowledge the advantages of regular discipline.[m] At the annual

[l] Gregory of Tours (l. v, c. 1. in tom. ii, p. 232) contrasts the poverty of Clovis with the wealth of his grandsons. Yet Remigius (in tom. iv, p. 52) mentions his *paternas opes*, as sufficient for the redemption of captives.

[m] See Gregory (l. ii, c. 27, 37, in tom. ii, p. 175, 181, 182). The famous story of the vase of Soissons explains both the power and the character of Clovis. As a point of controversy, it has been strangely tortured by Boulainvilliers, Dubos, and the other political antiquarians.

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review of the month of March, their arms were diligently inspected; and when they traversed a peaceful territory, they were prohibited from touching a blade of grass. The justice of Clovis was inexorable; and his careless or disobedient soldiers were punished with instant death. It would be superfluous to praise the valour of a Frank: but the valour of Clovis was directed by cool and consummate prudence.[n] In all his transactions with mankind, he calculated the weight of interest, of passion, and of opinion; and his measures were sometimes adapted to the sanguinary manners of the Germans, and sometimes moderated by the milder genius of Rome, and Christianity. He was intercepted in the career of victory, since he died in the forty-fifth year of his age; but he had already accomplished, in a reign of thirty years, the establishment of the French monarchy in Gaul.

His victory over Syagrius, A. D. 486.

The first exploit of Clovis was the defeat of Syagrius, the son of Ægidius; and the public quarrel might, on this occasion, be inflamed by private resentment. The glory of the father still insulted the Merovingian race; the power of the son might excite the jealous ambition of the king of the Franks. Syagrius inherited, as a patrimonial estate, the city and diocese of Soissons: the desolate remnant of the second Belgic, Rheims and Troyes, Beauvais and Amiens, would na-

[n] The duke of Nivernois, a noble statesman, who has managed weighty and delicate negociations, ingeniously illustrates (Mem. de l'Acad. des Inscriptions, tom. xx, p. 147-184) the political system of Clovis.

turally submit to the count or patrician;[o] and after the dissolution of the western empire, he might reign with the title, or at least with the authority, of king of the Romans.[p] As a Roman, he had been educated in the liberal studies of rhetoric and jurisprudence; but he was engaged by accident and policy in the familiar use of the Germanic idiom. The independent barbarians resorted to the tribunal of a stranger, who possessed the singular talent of explaining, in their native tongue, the dictates of reason and equity. The diligence and affability of their judge rendered him popular, the impartial wisdom of his decrees obtained their voluntary obedience, and the reign of Syagrius over the Franks and Burgundians, seemed to revive the original institution of civil society.[q] In the midst of these peaceful occupations, Syagrius received, and boldly accepted, the hostile defiance of Clovis; who challenged his rival in the spirit, and almost in the language, of

[o] M. Biet (in a Dissertation which deserved the prize of the Academy of Soissons, p. 178-226) has accurately defined the nature and extent of the kingdom of Syagrius, and his father; but he too readily allows the slight evidence of Dubos (tom. ii, p. 54-57) to deprive him of Beauvais and Amiens.

[p] I may observe that Fredegarius, in his Epitome of Gregory of Tours (tom. ii, p. 398) has prudently substituted the name of *Patricius* for the incredible title of *Rex Romanorum*.

[q] Sidonius (l. v, epist. 5, in tom. i, p. 794), who styles him the Solon, the Amphion of the barbarians, addresses this imaginary king in the tone of friendship and equality. From such offices of arbitration, the crafty Dejoces had raised himself to the throne of the Medes (Herodot. l. i, c. 96-100).

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chivalry, to appoint the day, and the field,[r] of battle. In the time of Cæsar, Soissons would have poured forth a body of fifty thousand horse; and such an army might have been plentifully supplied with shields, cuirasses, and military engines, from the three arsenals, or manufactures, of the city.[s] But the courage and numbers of the Gallic youth were long since exhausted; and the loose bands of volunteers, or mercenaries, who marched under the standard of Syagrius, were incapable of contending with the national valour of the Franks. It would be ungenerous, without some more accurate knowledge of his strength and resources, to condemn the rapid flight of Syagrius, who escaped, after the loss of a battle, to the distant court of Thoulouse. The feeble minority of Alaric could not assist, or protect, an unfortunate fugitive; the pusillanimous[t] Goths were intimidated by the menaces of Clovis; and the Roman *king*, after a short confinement, was delivered into the hands of the executioner. The Belgic cities surrendered to the king of the

[r] Campum sibi præparari jussit. M. Biet (p. 226-251) has diligently ascertained this field of battle, at Nogent, a Benedictine abbey, about ten miles to the north of Soissons. The ground was marked by a circle of pagan sepulchres; and Clovis bestowed the adjacent lands of Leuilly and Coucy on the church of Rheims.

[s] See Cæsar, Comment. de Bell. Gallic. ii, 4, in tom. i, p. 220, and the Notitiæ, tom. i, p. 126. The three *Fabricæ* of Soissons were *Scutaria*, *Balistaria*, and *Clinabaria*. The last supplied the complete armour of the heavy cuirassiers.

[t] The epithet must be confined to the circumstances; and history cannot justify the French prejudice of Gregory (l. ii, c. 27, in tom. ii, p. 175), ut Gothorum pavere *mos* est.

Franks; and his dominions were enlarged towards the East by the ample diocese of Tongres,[u] which Clovis subdued in the tenth year of his reign. CHAP. XXXVIII

The name of the Alemanni has been absurdly derived from their imaginary settlement on the banks of the *Leman* lake.[x] That fortunate district, from the lake to Avenche, and Mount Jura, was occupied by the Burgundians.[y] The northern parts of Helvetia had indeed been subdued by the ferocious Alemanni, who destroyed with their own hands the fruits of their conquest. A province, improved and adorned by the arts of Rome, was again reduced to a savage wilderness; and some vestige of the stately Vindonissa may still be discovered in the fertile and populous valley of the Aar.[z] From Defeat and submission of the Alemanni, A. D. 496.

[u] Dubos has satisfied me (tom. i, p. 277-286), that Gregory of Tours, his transcribers or his readers, have repeatedly confounded the German kingdom of *Thuringia*, beyond the Rhine, and the Gallic *city of Tongria*, on the Meuse, which was more anciently the country of the Eburones, and more recently the diocese of Liege.

[x] Populi habitantes juxta *Lemannum* lacum, *Alemanni* dicuntur. (Servius, ad Virgil. Georgic. iv, 278.) Dom. Bouquet (tom. i, p. 817) has only alleged the more recent and corrupt text of Isidore of Seville.

[y] Gregory of Tours sends St Lupicinus inter illa Jurensis deserti secreta, quæ, inter Burgundiam Alamanniamque sita, Aventicæ adjacent civitati, in tom. i, p. 648. M. de Watteville (Hist. de la Consideration Helvetique, tom. i, p. 9, 10) has accurately defined the Helvetian limits of the dutchy of Alemannia, and the Tranjurane Burgundy. They were commensurate with the diocese of Constance and Avenche, or Lausanne, and are still discriminated in modern Switzerland, by the use of the German, or French, language.

[z] See Guilliman. de Rebus Helveticis, l. i, c. 3, p. 11, 12. Within the ancient walls of Vindonissa, the castle of Habsburgh, the abbey of Konigsfield, and the town of Bruck, have successively arisen. The

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the source of the Rhine, to its conflux with the Mein and the Moselle, the formidable swarms of the Alemanni commanded either side of the river, by the right of ancient possession, or recent victory. They had spread themselves into Gaul, over the modern provinces of Alsace and Lorraine; and their bold invasion of the kingdom of Cologne summoned the Salic prince to the defence of his Ripuarian allies. Clovis encountered the invaders of Gaul in the plain of Tolbiac, about twenty-four miles from Cologne; and the two fiercest nations of Germany were mutually animated by the memory of past exploits, and the prospect of future greatness. The Franks, after an obstinate struggle, gave way; and the Alemanni, raising a shout of victory, impetuously pressed their retreat. But the battle was restored by the valour, the conduct, and perhaps by the piety of Clovis; and the event of the bloody day decided for ever the alternative of empire or servitude. The last king of the Alemánni was slain in the field, and his people were slaughtered and pursued, till they threw down their arms, and yielded to the mercy of the conqueror. Without discipline it was impossible for them to rally; they had contemptuously demolished the walls and fortifications which might have protected their distress; and they were followed into the heart of their forests,

philosophic traveller may compare the monuments of Roman conquest, of feudal or Austrian tyranny, of monkish superstition, and of industrious freedom. If he be truly a philosopher, he will applaud the merit and happiness of his own times.

by an enemy, not less active, or intrepid, than themselves. The great Theodoric congratulated the victory of Clovis, whose sister Albofleda the king of Italy had lately married; but he mildly interceded with his brother in favour of the suppliants and fugitives, who had implored his protection. The Gallic territories, which were possessed by the Alemanni, became the prize of their conqueror; and the haughty nation, invincible, or rebellious, to the arms of Rome, acknowledged the sovereignty of the Merovingian kings, who graciously permitted them to enjoy their peculiar manners and institutions, under the government of official, and, at length, of hereditary dukes. After the conquest of the western provinces, the Franks alone maintained their ancient habitations beyond the Rhine. They gradually subdued, and civilized the exhausted countries, as far as the Elbe, and the mountains of Bohemia; and the peace of Europe was secured by the obedience of Germany.[a]

Till the thirtieth year of his age, Clovis continued to worship the gods of his ancestors.[b] Conversion of Clovis, A. D. 496.

[a] Gregory of Tours (l. ii, 30, 37, in tom. ii, p. 176, 177, 182), the Gesta Francorum (in tom. ii, p. 551), and the epistle of Theodoric (Cassiodor. Variar. l. ii, c. 41, in tom. iv, p. 4), represent the defeat of the Alemanni. Some of their tribes settled in Rhætia, under the protection of Theodoric; whose successors ceded the colony and their country to the grandson of Clovis. The state of the Alemanni under the Merovingian kings, may be seen in Mascou (Hist. of the Ancient Germans, xi, 8, &c. Annotation xxxvi), and Guilliman (de Reb. Helvet. l. ii, c. 10-12, p. 72-80).

[b] Clotilda, or rather Gregory, supposes that Clovis worshipped the gods of Greece and Rome. The fact is incredible, and the mis-

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His disbelief, or rather disregard, of Christianity might encourage him to pillage with less remorse the churches of an hostile territory: but his subjects of Gaul enjoyed the free exercise of religious worship; and the bishops entertained a more favourable hope of the idolater, than of the heretics. The Merovingian prince had contracted a fortunate alliance with the fair Clotilda, the niece of the king of Burgundy, who, in the midst of an Arian court, was educated in the profession of the catholic faith. It was her interest, as well as her duty, to achieve the conversion[c] of a pagan husband; and Clovis insensibly listened to the voice of love and religion. He consented (perhaps such terms had been previously stipulated) to the baptism of his eldest son; and though the sudden death of the infant excited some superstitious fears, he was persuaded, a second time, to repeat the dangerous experiment. In the distress of the battle of Tolbiac, Clovis loudly invoked the god of Clotilda, and the Christians; and victory disposed him to hear, with respectful gratitude, the elo-

take only shews how completely, in less than a century, the national religion of the Franks had been abolished, and even forgotten.

[c] Gregory of Tours relates the marriage and conversion of Clovis (l. ii, c. 28-31, in tom. ii, p. 175-178). Even Fredegarius, or the nameless Epitomizer (in tom. ii. p. 398-400), the author of the Gesta Francorum (in tom. ii, p. 548-552), and Aimoin himself (l. i, c. 13, in tom. iii, p. 37-40), may be heard without disdain. Tradition might long preserve some curious circumstances of these important transactions.

quent[d] Remigius,[e] bishop of Rheims, who forcibly displayed the temporal and spiritual advantages of his conversion. The king declared himself satisfied of the truth of the catholic faith; and the political reasons which might have suspended his public profession, were removed by the devout or loyal acclamations of the Franks, who shewed themselves alike prepared to follow their heroic leader to the field of battle, or to the baptismal font. The important ceremony was performed in the cathedral of Rheims, with every circumstance of magnificence and solemnity, that could impress an awful sense of religion on the minds of its rude proselytes.[f] The new Constantine was immediately baptized, with three thousand of his warlike subjects; and their example was imitated by the remainder of the

[d] A traveller, who returned from Rheims to Auvergne, had stolen a copy of his Declamations from the secretary or bookseller of the modest archbishop (Sidonius Apollinar. l. ix, epist. 7). Four epistles of Remigius, which are still extant (in tom. iv, p. 51, 52, 53), do not correspond with the splendid praise of Sidonius.

[e] Hincmar, one of the successors of Remigius (A. D. 845-882), has composed his life (in tom. iii, p. 373-380). The authority of ancient MSS. of the church of Rheims might inspire some confidence, which is destroyed, however, by the selfish and audacious fictions of Hincmar. It is remarkable enough, that Remigius, who was consecrated at the age of twenty-two (A. D. 457), filled the episcopal chair seventy-four years. (Pagi Critica, in Baron. tom. ii, p. 384, 572.)

[f] A phial (the *Sainte Ampoulle*) of holy, or rather celestial oil, was brought down by a white dove, for the baptism of Clovis, and it is still used, and renewed, in the coronation of the kings of France. Hincmar (he aspired to the primacy of Gaul) is the first author of this fable (in tom. iii, p. 377), whose slight foundations the Abbe de Vertot (Memoires de l'Academie des Inscriptions, tom. ii, p. 619-633) has undermined, with profound respect, and consummate dexterity.

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gentle barbarians, who, in obedience to the victorious prelate, adored the cross which they had burnt, and burnt the idols which they had formerly adored.[g] The mind of Clovis was susceptible of transient fervour: he was exasperated by the pathetic tale of the passion and death of Christ; and, instead of weighing the salutary consequences of that mysterious sacrifice, he exclaimed, with indiscreet fury—"Had "I been present at the head of my valiant Franks, "I would have revenged his injuries."[h] But the savage conqueror of Gaul was incapable of examining the proofs of a religion, which depends on the laborious investigation of historic evidence, and speculative theology. He was still more incapable of feeling the mild influence of the gospel, which persuades and purifies the heart of a genuine convert. His ambitious reign was a perpetual violation of moral and christian duties; his hands were stained with blood, in peace as well as in war; and, as soon as Clovis had dismissed a synod of the Gallican church, he calmly assassinated *all* the princes of the Merovingian race.[i] Yet the king of the

[g] Mitis depone colla, Sicamber; adora quod incendisti, incende quod adorasti. Greg. Turon. l. ii, c. 31, in tom. ii, p. 177.

[h] Si ego ibidem cum Francis meis fuissem, injurias ejus vindicassem. This rash expression, which Gregory has prudently concealed, is celebrated by Fredegarius (Epitom. c. 21, in tom. ii, p. 400); Aimoin (l. i, c. 16, in tom. iii, p. 40), and the Chroniques de St Denys (l. i, c. 20, in tom. iii, p. 171), as an admirable effusion of christian zeal.

[i] Gregory (l. ii, c. 40-43, in tom. ii, p. 183-185), after coolly relating the repeated crimes, and affected remorse, of Clovis,

Franks might sincerely worship the Christian God, as a Being more excellent and powerful than his national deities; and the signal deliverance and victory of Tolbiac encouraged Clovis to confide in the future protection of the Lord of Hosts. Martin, the most popular of the saints, had filled the western world with the fame of those miracles, which were incessantly performed at his holy sepulchre of Tours. His visible or invisible aid promoted the cause of a liberal and orthodox prince; and the profane remark of Clovis himself, that St Martin was an expensive friend,[k] need not be interpreted as the symptom of any permanent, or rational, scepticism. But earth, as well as Heaven, rejoiced in the conversion of the Franks. On the memorable day, when Clovis ascended from the baptismal font, he alone, in the Christian world, deserved the name and prerogatives of a catholic king. The emperor Anastasius entertained some dangerous errors concerning the nature of the divine incarnation; and the barbarians of Italy, Africa, Spain, and Gaul, were involved in the Arian heresy. The eldest, or rather the only, son of the church, was acknowledged by the clergy as their lawful sovereign, or glorious deli-

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concludes, perhaps undesignedly, with a lesson, which ambition will never hear; "His ita transactis . . . obiit."

[k] After the Gothic victory Clovis made rich offerings to St Martin of Tours. He wished to redeem his war-horse by the gift of one hundred pieces of gold; but the enchanted steed could not move from the stable till the price of his redemption had been doubled. This *miracle* provoked the king to exclaim, Vere B. Martinus est bonus in auxilia, sed carus in negotio (Gesta Francorum, in tom. ii, p. 554, 555.)

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verer; and the arms of Clovis were strenuously supported by the zeal and favour of the catholic faction.[1]

Submission of the Armoricans and the Roman troops, A. D. 491, &c.

Under the Roman empire, the wealth and jurisdiction of the bishops, their sacred character, and perpetual office, their numerous dependants, popular eloquence, and provincial assemblies, had rendered them always respectable, and sometimes dangerous. Their influence was augmented with the progress of superstition; and the establishment of the French monarchy may, in some degree, be ascribed to the firm alliance of an hundred prelates, who reigned in the discontented, or independent, cities of Gaul. The slight foundations of the *Armorican* republic had been repeatedly shaken, or overthrown; but the same people still guarded their domestic freedom; asserted the dignity of the Roman name; and bravely resisted the predatory inroads, and regular attacks, of Clovis, who laboured to extend his conquests from the Seine to the Loire. Their successful opposition introduced an equal and honourable union. The Franks esteemed the valour of the Armoricans,[m] and the Armoricans

[1] See the epistle from Pope Anastasius to the royal convert (in tom. iv, p. 50, 51.) Avitus, bishop of Vienna, addressed Clovis on the same subject (p. 49); and many of the Latin bishops would assure him of their joy and attachment.

[m] Instead of the Αρεθορυχοι, an unknown people, who now appear in the text of Procopius, Hadrian de Valois has restored the proper name of the Αρμορυχοι; and this easy correction has been almost universally approved. Yet an unprejudiced reader would naturally suppose, that Procopius means to describe a tribe of Germans in the alliance of Rome; and not a confederacy of Gallic cities, which had revolted from the empire.

were reconciled by the religion of the Franks. The military force which had been stationed for the defence of Gaul, consisted of one hundred different bands of cavalry or infantry; and these troops, while they assumed the title and privileges of Roman soldiers, were renewed by an incessant supply of the barbarian youth. The extreme fortifications, and scattered fragments, of the empire, were still defended by their hopeless courage. But their retreat was intercepted, and their communication was impracticable: they were abandoned by the Greek princes of Constantinople, and they piously disclaimed all connection with the Arian usurpers of Gaul. They accepted, without shame or reluctance, the generous capitulation, which was proposed by a catholic hero; and this spurious, or legitimate, progeny of the Roman legions, was distinguished in the succeeding age by their arms, their ensigns, and their peculiar dress and institutions. But the national strength was increased by these powerful and voluntary accessions; and the neighbouring kingdoms dreaded the numbers, as well as the spirit, of the Franks. The reduction of the northern provinces of Gaul, instead of being decided by the chance of a single battle, appears to have been slowly effected by the gradual operation of war and treaty; and Clovis acquired each object of his ambition, by such efforts, or such concessions, as were adequate to its real value. *His* savage character, and the virtues of Henry IV, suggest the most opposite ideas of human nature: yet some re-

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semblance may be found in the situation of two princes, who conquered France by their valour, their policy, and the merits of a seasonable conversion.[n]

The Burgundian war, A. D. 499.

The kingdom of the Burgundians, which was defined by the course of two Gallic rivers, the Saone and the Rhone, extended from the forest of Vosges to the Alps and the sea of Marseilles.[o] The sceptre was in the hands of Gundobald. That valiant and ambitious prince had reduced the number of royal candidates by the death of two brothers, one of whom was the father of Clotilda;[p] but his imperfect prudence still permitted Godegesil, the youngest of his brothers, to possess the dependent principality of Geneva. The Arian monarch was justly alarmed by the satisfaction, and the hopes, which seemed to animate

[n] This important digression of Procopius (de Bell. Gothic. l. i, c. 12, in tom. ii, p. 29-36,) illustrates the origin of the French monarchy. Yet I must observe, 1. That the Greek historian betrays an inexcusable ignorance of the geography of the West. 2. That these treaties and privileges, which should leave some lasting traces, are totally invisible in Gregory of Tours, the Salic laws, &c.

[o] Regnum circa Rhodanum aut Ararim cum provinciâ Massiliensi retinebant. Greg. Turon. l. ii, c. 32, in tom. ii, p. 178. The province of Marseilles, as far as the Durance, was afterwards ceded to the Ostrogoths: and the signatures of twenty-five bishops are supposed to represent the kingdom of Burgundy, A. D. 519. (Concil. Epaon. in tom. iv, p. 104, 105). Yet I would except Vindonissa. The bishop, who lived under the pagan Alemanni, would naturally resort to the synods of the next christian kingdom. Mascou (in his four first annotations) has explained many circumstances relative to the Burgundian monarchy.

[p] Mascou (Hist. of the Germans, xi, 10), who very reasonably distrusts the testimony of Gregory of Tours, has produced a passage from Avitus (epist. v.), to prove that Gundobald affected to deplore the tragic event, which his subjects affected to applaud.

his clergy and people, after the conversion of Clovis; and Gundobald convened at Lyons an assembly of his bishops, to reconcile, if it were possible, their religious and political discontents. A vain conference was agitated between the two factions. The Arians upbraided the catholics with the worship of three Gods; the catholics defended their cause by theological distinctions; and the usual arguments, objections, and replies were reverberated with obstinate clamour; till the king revealed his secret apprehensions, by an abrupt but decisive question, which he addressed to the orthodox bishops. "If you truly "profess the christian religion, why do you not "restrain the king of the Franks? He has de- "clared war against me, and forms alliances "with my enemies for my destruction. A san- "guinary and covetous mind is not the symptom "of a sincere conversion: let him shew his "faith by his works." The answer of Avitus, bishop of Vienna, who spoke in the name of his brethren, was delivered with the voice and countenance of an angel. "We are ignorant of the "motives and intentions of the king of the "Franks: but we are taught by scripture, that "the kingdoms which abandon the divine law, "are frequently subverted; and that enemies "will arise on every side against those who have "made God their enemy. Return, with thy "people, to the law of God, and he will give "peace and security to thy dominions." The king of Burgundy, who was not prepared to accept the condition, which the catholics considered as essential to the treaty, delayed and dis-

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missed the ecclesiastical conference; after reproaching his bishops, that Clovis, their friend and proselyte, had privately tempted the allegiance of his brother.[q]

Victory of Clovis, A. D. 500.

The allegiance of his brother was already seduced; and the obedience of Godegesil, who joined the royal standard with the troops of Geneva, more effectually promoted the success of the conspiracy. While the Franks and Burgundians contended with equal valour, his seasonable desertion decided the event of the battle; and as Gundebald was faintly supported by the disaffected Gauls, he yielded to the arms of Clovis, and hastily retreated from the field, which appears to have been situated between Langres and Dijon. He distrusted the strength of Dijon, a quadrangular fortress, encompassed by two rivers, and by a wall thirty feet high, and fifteen thick, with four gates, and thirty-three towers:[r] he abandoned to the pursuit of Clovis the important cities of Lyons and Vienna; and Gundobald still fled with precipitation, till he had reached Avignon, at the distance of two hundred and fifty miles from the field of battle. A long siege, and an artful negotiation, admonished

[q] See the original conference (in tom. iv, p. 99-102). Avitus, the principal actor, and probably the secretary of the meeting, was bishop of Vienna. A short account of his person and works may be found in Dupin (Bibliotheque Ecclesiastique, tom. v, p. 5-10).

[r] Gregory of Tours (l. iii, c. 19, in tom. ii, p. 197) indulges his genius, or rather transcribes some more eloquent writer, in the description of Dijon; a castle, which already deserved the title of a city. It depended on the bishops of Langres till the twelfth century, and afterwards became the capital of the dukes of Burgundy. Longuerue, Description de la France, part i, p. 280.

the king of the Franks of the danger and difficulty of his enterprise. He imposed a tribute on the Burgundian prince, compelled him to pardon and reward his brother's treachery, and proudly returned to his own dominions, with the spoils and captives of the southern provinces. This splendid triumph was soon clouded by the intelligence, that Gundobald had violated his recent obligations, and that the unfortunate Godegesil, who was left at Vienna, with a garrison of five thousand Franks,* had been besieged, surprised, and massacred, by his inhuman brother. Such an outrage might have exasperated the patience of the most peaceful sovereign; yet the conqueror of Gaul dissembled the injury, released the tribute, and accepted the alliance, and military service, of the king of Burgundy. Clovis no longer possessed those advantages, which had assured the success of the preceding war; and his rival, instructed by adversity, had found new resources in the affections of his people. The Gauls or Romans applauded the mild and impartial laws of Gundobald, which almost raised them to the same level with their conquerors. The bishops were reconciled, and flattered by the hopes, which he artfully suggested, of his approaching conversion: and though he eluded their accomplishment to the last moment of

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* The epitomizer of Gregory of Tours (in tom. ii, p. 401) has supplied this number of Franks; but he rashly supposes that they were cut in pieces by Gundobald. The prudent Burgundian spared the soldiers of Clovis, and sent these captives to the king of the Visigoths, who settled them in the territory of Thoulouse.

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his life, his moderation secured the peace, and suspended the ruin, of the kingdom of Burgundy.[t]

Final conquest of Burgundy by the Franks, A. D. 532.

I am impatient to pursue the final ruin of that kingdom, which was accomplished under the reign of Sigismond, the son of Gundobald. The catholic Sigismond has acquired the honours of a saint and martyr;[u] but the hands of the royal saint were stained with the blood of his innocent son, whom he inhumanly sacrificed to the pride and resentment of a stepmother. He soon discovered his error, and bewailed the irreparable loss. While Sigismond embraced the corpse of the unfortunate youth, he received a severe admonition from one of his attendants.—"It is "not his situation, O king! it is thine which "deserves pity and lamentation." The reproaches of a guilty conscience were alleviated, however, by his liberal donations to the monastery of Agaunum, or St Maurice, in Vallais; which he himself had founded in honour of the imaginary martyrs of the Thebæan legion.[x] A

[t] In this Burgundian war I have followed Gregory of Tours, (l. ii, c. 32, 33, in tom. ii, p. 178, 179), whose narrative *appears* so incompatible with that of Procopius, (de Bell. Goth. l. i. c. 12, in tom. ii, p. 31, 32,) that some critics have supposed *two* different wars. The Abbe Dubos (Hist. Critique, &c. tom. ii, p. 126-162), has distinctly represented the causes and the events.

[u] See his life or legend (in tom. *iii*, p. 402). A martyr! how strangely has that word been distorted from its original sense of a common witness. St Sigismond was remarkable for the cure of fevers.

[x] Before the end of the fifth century, the church of St Maurice, and his Thebæan legion, had rendered Agaunum a place of devout pilgrimage. A promiscuous community of both sexes had intro-

full chorus of perpetual psalmody was instituted by the pious king; he assiduously practised the austere devotion of the monks: and it was his humble prayer, that Heaven would inflict in this world the punishment of his sins. His prayer was heard; the avengers were at hand; and the provinces of Burgundy were overwhelmed by an army of victorious Franks. After the event of an unsuccessful battle, Sigismond, who wished to protract his life that he might prolong his penance, concealed himself in the desert in a religious habit, till he was discovered and betrayed by his subjects, who solicited the favour of their new masters. The captive monarch, with his wife and two children, were transported to Orleans, and buried alive in a deep well, by the stern command of the sons of Clovis; whose cruelty might derive some excuse from the maxims and examples of their barbarous age. Their ambition, which urged them to achieve the conquest of Burgundy, was inflamed, or disguised, by filial piety; and Clotilda, whose sanctity did not consist in the forgiveness of injuries, pressed them to revenge her father's death on the family of his assassin. The rebellious Burgundians, for they attempted to break their chains, were still permitted to enjoy their national laws under the obligation of tribute and military service; and the Merovingian princes

duced some deeds of darkness, which were abolished (A. D. 515) by the regular monastery of Sigismond. Within fifty years, his *angels of light* made a nocturnal sally to murder their bishop and his clergy. See in the Bibliotheque Raisonnee (tom. xxxvi, p. 435-438) the curious remark of a learned librarian of Geneva.

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peaceably reigned over a kingdom, whose glory and greatness had been first overthrown by the arms of Clovis.[y]

The Gothic war, A. D. 507.

The first victory of Clovis had insulted the honour of the Goths. They viewed his rapid progress with jealousy and terror; and the youthful fame of Alaric was oppressed by the more potent genius of his rival. Some disputes inevitably arose on the edge of their contiguous dominions; and after the delays of fruitless negotiation, a personal interview of the two kings was proposed and accepted. This conference of Clovis and Alaric was held in a small island of the Loire, near Amboise. They embraced, familiarly conversed, and feasted together; and separated with the warmest professions of peace and brotherly love. But their apparent confidence concealed a dark suspicion of hostile and treacherous designs; and their mutual complaints solicited, eluded, and disclaimed a final arbitration. At Paris, which he already considered as his royal seat, Clovis declared to an assembly of the princes and warriors, the pretence, and the motive, of a Gothic war. "It grieves me to see "that the Arians still possess the fairest portion "of Gaul. Let us march against them with the "aid of God; and, having vanquished the he"retics, we will possess, and divide, their fertile

[y] Marius, bishop of Avenche (Chron. in tom. ii, p. 15), has marked the authentic dates, and Gregory of Tours (l. iii, c. 5, 6, in tom. ii, p. 188, 189) has expressed the principal facts, of the life of Sigismond, and the conquest of Burgundy. Procopius, (in tom. ii, p. 34), and Agathias, (in tom. ii, p. 49), shew their remote and imperfect knowledge.

"provinces."[z] The Franks, who were inspired by hereditary valour and recent zeal, applauded the generous design of their monarch; expressed their resolution to conquer or die, since death and conquest would be equally profitable; and solemnly protested that they would never shave their beards, till victory should absolve them from that inconvenient vow. The enterprise was promoted by the public, or private, exhortations of Clotilda. She reminded her husband, how effectually some pious foundation would propitiate the Deity, and his servants: and the christian hero, darting his battle-axe with a skilful and nervous hand,—"There, (said "he), on that spot where my *Francisca*[a] shall "fall, will I erect a church in honour of the "holy apostles." This ostentatious piety confirmed and justified the attachment of the catholics, with whom he secretly corresponded; and their devout wishes were gradually ripened into a formidable conspiracy. The people of Aquitain was alarmed by the indiscreet reproaches of their Gothic tyrants, who justly accused them of preferring the dominion of the Franks; and

[z] Gregory of Tours (l. ii, c. 37, in tom. ii, p. 181) inserts the short but persuasive speech of Clovis. Valde moleste fero, quod hi Ariani partem teneant Galliarum, (the author of the Gesta Francorum, in tom. ii, p. 553, adds the precious epithet of *optimam*) eamus cum Dei adjutorio, et, superatis eis, redigamus terram in ditionem nostram.

[a] Tunc rex projecit a se in directum Bipennem suam quod est *Francisca*, &c. (Gesta Franc. in tom. ii, p. 554). The form, and use, of this weapon, are clearly described by Procopius (in tom. ii, p. 37). Examples of its *national* appellation, in Latin and French, may be found in the Glossary of Ducange, and the large Dictionnaire de Trevoux.

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their zealous adherent Quintianus, bishop of Rodez,[b] preached more forcibly in his exile than in his diocese. To resist these foreign and domestic enemies, who were fortified by the alliance of the Burgundians, Alaric collected his troops, far more numerous than the military powers of Clovis. The Visigoths resumed the exercise of arms, which they had neglected in a long and luxurious peace:[c] a select band of valiant and robust slaves attended their masters to the field;[d] and the cities of Gaul were compelled to furnish their doubtful and reluctant aid. Theodoric, king of the Ostrogoths, who reigned in Italy, had laboured to maintain the tranquillity of Gaul; and he assumed, or affected for that purpose, the impartial character of a mediator. But the sagacious monarch dreaded the rising empire of Clovis, and he was firmly engaged to support the national and religious cause of the Goths.

The accidental, or artificial, prodigies, which adorned the expedition of Clovis, were accepted,

[b] It is singular enough, that some important and authentic facts should be found in a life of Quintianus, composed in rhyme, in the old *Patois* of Rouergue (Dubos, Hist. Critique, &c. tom. ii, p. 179.).

[c] Quamvis fortitudini vestræ confidentiam tribuat parentum vestrorum innumerabilis multitudo; quamvis Attilam potentem reminiscamini Visigotharum viribus inclinatum; tamen quia populorum ferocia corda longâ pace mollescunt, cavete subito in aleam mittere, quos constat tantis temporibus exercitia non habere. Such was the salutary, but fruitless, advice of peace, of reason, and of Theodoric (Cassiodor. l. iii, ep. 2).

[d] Montesquieu (Esprit des Loix, l. xv, c. 14) mentions and approves the law of the Visigoths (l. ix, tit. 2, in tom. iv, p. 425), which obliged all masters to arm, and send, or lead, into the field, a tenth of their slaves.

by a superstitious age, as the manifest declaration of the Divine favour. He marched from Paris; and as he proceeded with decent reverence through the holy diocese of Tours, his anxiety tempted him to consult the shrine of St Martin, the sanctuary, and the oracle of Gaul. His messengers were instructed to remark the words of the Psalm, which should happen to be chaunted at the precise moment when they entered the church. Those words most fortunately expressed the valour and victory of the champions of Heaven, and the application was easily transferred to the new Joshua, the new Gideon, who went forth to battle against the enemies of the Lord.[e] Orleans secured to the Franks a bridge on the Loire; but, at the distance of forty miles from Poitiers, their progress was intercepted by an extraordinary swell of the river Vigenna, or Vienne; and the opposite banks were covered by the encampment of the Visigoths. Delay must be always dangerous to barbarians, who consume the country through which they march; and had Clovis possessed leisure and materials, it might have been impracticable to construct a bridge, or to force a

[e] This mode of divination, by accepting as an omen the first sacred words, which in particular circumstances should be presented to the eye or ear, was derived from the pagans; and the Psalter, or Bible, was substituted to the Poems of Homer and Virgil. From the fourth to the fourteenth century, these *sortes sanctorum*, as they are styled, were repeatedly condemned by the decrees of councils, and repeatedly practised by kings, bishops, and saints. See a curious dissertation of the Abbé du Resnel, in the Memoires de l'Academie, tom. xix. p. 287-310.

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passage, in the face of a superior enemy. But the affectionate peasants, who were impatient to welcome their deliverer, could easily betray some unknown, or unguarded, ford; the merit of the discovery was enhanced by the useful interposition of fraud or fiction; and a white hart, of singular size and beauty, appeared to guide and animate the march of the catholic army. The counsels of the Visigoths were irresolute and distracted. A crowd of impatient warriors, presumptuous in their strength, and disdaining to fly before the robbers of Germany, excited Alaric to assert in arms the name and blood of the conqueror of Rome. The advice of the graver chieftains pressed him to elude the first ardour of the Franks; and to expect, in the southern provinces of Gaul, the veteran and victorious Ostrogoths, whom the king of Italy had already sent to his assistance. The decisive moments were wasted in idle deliberation; the Goths too hastily abandoned, perhaps, an advantageous post; and the opportunity of a secure retreat was lost by their slow and disorderly motions. After Clovis had passed the ford, as it is still named, of the *Hart*, he advanced with bold and hasty steps to prevent the escape of the enemy. His nocturnal march was directed by a flaming meteor, suspended in the air above the cathedral of Poitiers; and this signal, which might be previously concerted with the orthodox successor of St Hilary, was compared to the column of fire that guided the Israelites in the desert. At the third hour of the day, about ten

miles beyond Poitiers, Clovis overtook, and instantly attacked, the Gothic army; whose defeat was already prepared by terror and confusion. Yet they rallied in their extreme distress, and the martial youths, who had clamorously demanded the battle, refused to survive the ignominy of flight. The two kings encountered each other in single combat. Alaric fell by the hand of his rival; and the victorious Frank was saved by the goodness of his cuirass, and the vigour of his horse, from the spears of two desperate Goths, who furiously rode against him to revenge the death of their sovereign. The vague expression of a mountain of the slain, serves to indicate a cruel, though indefinite, slaughter; but Gregory has carefully observed, that his valiant countryman Apollinaris, the son of Sidonius, lost his life at the head of the nobles of Auvergne. Perhaps these suspected catholics had been maliciously exposed to the blind assault of the enemy; and perhaps the influence of religion was superseded by personal attachment, or military honour.[f] CHAP. XXXVIII.

Conquest of Aquitain by the Franks, A. D. 508.

Such is the empire of Fortune, (if we may still disguise our ignorance under that popular name, that it is almost equally difficult to fore-

[f] After correcting the text, or excusing the mistake, of Procopius, who places the defeat of Alaric near Carcassone, we may conclude, from the evidence of Gregory, Fortunatus, and the author of the Gesta Francorum, that the battle was fought *in campo Vocladensi*, on the banks of the Clain, about ten miles to the south of Poitiers. Clovis overtook and attacked the Visigoths near Vivonne, and the victory was decided near a village still named Champagné St Hilare. See the Dissertations of the Abbé le Bœuf, tom. i, p. 304-331.

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see the events of war, or to explain their various consequences. A bloody and complete victory has sometimes yielded no more than the possession of the field; and the loss of ten thousand men has sometimes been sufficient to destroy, in a single day, the work of ages. The decisive battle of Poitiers was followed by the conquest of Aquitain. Alaric had left behind him an infant son, a bastard competitor, factious nobles, and a disloyal people; and the remaining forces of the Goths were oppressed by the general consternation, or opposed to each other in civil discord. The victorious king of the Franks proceeded without delay to the siege of Angouleme. At the sound of his trumpets the walls of the city imitated the example of Jericho, and instantly fell to the ground; a splendid miracle, which may be reduced to the supposition, that some clerical engineers had secretly undermined the foundations of the rampart.[g] At Bordeaux, which had submitted without resistance, Clovis established his winter quarters; and his prudent economy transported from Thoulouse the royal treasures, which were deposited in the capital of the monarchy. The conqueror penetrated as far as the confines of Spain;[h] restored the honours

[g] Angouleme is in the road from Poitiers to Bordeaux; and although Gregory delays the siege, I can more readily believe that he confounded the order of history, than that Clovis neglected the rules of war.

[h] Pyrenæos montes usque Perpinianum subjecit, is the expression of Rorico, which betrays his recent date; since Perpignan did not exist before the tenth century (Marca Hispanica, p. 458). This

of the catholic church; fixed in Aquitain a colony of Franks;[i] and delegated to his lieutenants the easy task of subduing, or extirpating, the nation of the Visigoths. But the Visigoths were protected by the wise and powerful monarch of Italy. While the balance was still equal, Theodoric had perhaps delayed the march of the Ostrogoths; but their strenuous efforts successfully resisted the ambition of Clovis; and the army of the Franks, and their Burgundian allies, was compelled to raise the siege of Arles, with the loss, as it is said, of thirty thousand men. These vicissitudes inclined the fierce spirit of Clovis to acquiesce in an advantageous treaty of peace. The Visigoths were suffered to retain the possession of Septimania, a narrow tract of sea-coast, from the Rhone to the Pyrenees; but the ample province of Aquitain, from those mountains to the Loire, was indissolubly united to the kingdom of France.[k] CHAP. XXXVIII.

florid and fabulous writer (perhaps a monk of Amiens; see the Abbé le Bœuf, Mem. de l'Academie, tom. xvii, p. 228-245) relates, in the *allegorical* character of a shepherd, the general history of his countrymen the Franks; but his narrative ends with the death of Clovis.

[i] The author of the Gesta Francorum positively affirms, that Clovis fixed a body of Franks in the Saintonge and Bourdelois; and he is not injudiciously followed by Rorico, electos milites, atque fortissimos, cum parvulis, atque mulieribus. Yet it should seem that they soon mingled with the Romans of Aquitain, till Charlemagne introduced a more numerous and powerful colony (Dubos Hist. Critique, tom. ii, p. 215).

[k] In the composition of the Gothic war, I have used the following materials, with due regard to their unequal value. Four epistles from Theodoric king of Italy (Cassiodor. l. iii, epist. 1-4, in tom. iv, p. 3-5); Procopius (de Bell. Goth. l. i, c. 12, in tom. ii, p. 32,

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Consulship of Clovis, A. D. 510.

After the success of the Gothic war, Clovis accepted the honours of the Roman consulship. The emperor Anastasius ambitiously bestowed on the most powerful rival of Theodoric, the title and ensigns of that eminent dignity; yet, from some unknown cause, the name of Clovis has not been inscribed in the *Fasti* either of the East or West.[1] On the solemn day, the monarch of Gaul, placing a diadem on his head, was invested in the church of St Martin, with a purple tunic and mantle. From thence he proceeded on horseback to the cathedral of Tours; and, as he passed through the streets, profusely scattered, with his own hand, a donative of gold and silver to the joyful multitude, who incessantly repeated their acclamations of *Consul* and *Augustus*. The actual, or legal, authority of Clovis, could not receive any new accessions from the consular dignity. It was a name, a shadow, an empty pageant; and if the conqueror had been instructed to claim the ancient prero-

33); Gregory of Tours (l. ii, c. 35, 36, 37, in tom. ii, p. 181-183); Jornandes (de Reb. Geticis, c. 58, in tom. ii, p. 28); Fortunatus (in Vit. St Hilarii, in tom. iii, p. 380); Isidore (in Chron. Goth. in tom. ii, p. 702); the Epitome of Gregory of Tours (in tom. ii, p. 401); the author of the Gesta Francorum (in tom. ii, p. 553-555); the Fragments of Fredegarius (in tom. ii, p. 463); Aimoin (l. i, c. 20, in tom. iii, p. 41, 42), and Rorico (l. iv, in tom. iii, p. 14-19).

[1] The *Fasti* of Italy would naturally reject a consul, the enemy of their sovereign; but any ingenious hypothesis that might explain the silence of Constantinople and Egypt (the Chronicle of Marcellinus, and the Paschal), is overturned by the similar silence of Marius bishop of Avenche, who composed his *Fasti* in the kingdom of Burgundy. If the evidence of Gregory of Tours were less weighty and positive, (l. ii, c. 38, in tom. ii, p. 183), I could believe that Clovis, like Odoacer, received the lasting title and honours of *Patrician* (Pagi Critica, tom. ii, p. 474, 492).

gatives of that high office, they must have expired with the period of its annual duration. But the Romans were disposed to revere, in the person of their master, that antique title which the emperors condescended to assume: the barbarian himself seemed to contract a sacred obligation to respect the majesty of the republic; and the successors of Theodosius, by soliciting his friendship, tacitly forgave, and almost ratified, the usurpation of Gaul.

Final establishment of the French monarchy in Gaul, A. D. 536.

Twenty-five years after the death of Clovis, this important concession was more formally declared, in a treaty between his sons and the emperor Justinian. The Ostrogoths of Italy, unable to defend their distant acquisitions, had resigned to the Franks the cities of Arles and Marseilles: of Arles, still adorned with the seat of a prætorian prefect, and of Marseilles, enriched by the advantages of trade and navigation.[m] This transaction was confirmed by the imperial authority; and Justinian, generously yielding to the Franks the sovereignty of the countries beyond the Alps, which they already possessed, absolved the provincials from their allegiance; and established on a more lawful, though not more solid, foundation, the throne of the Merovingians.[n] From that era, they en-

[m] Under the Merovingian kings, Marseilles still imported from the East, paper, wine, oil, linen, silk, precious stones, spices, &c. The Gauls, or Franks, traded to Syria, and the Syrians were established in Gaul. See M. de Guignes, Mem. de l'Academie, tom. xxxvii, p. 471–475.

[n] Ου γαρ ποτε ωοντο Γαλλιας ξυν τω ασφαλει κεκτησθαι φραγγοι, μη τυ αυτοκρατορος το εργον επισφραγισαντος τυτο γε. This strong declaration

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joyed the right of celebrating at Arles the games of the Circus; and by a singular privilege, which was denied even to the Persian monarch, the *gold* coin, impressed with their name and image, obtained a legal currency in the empire.[o] A Greek historian of that age has praised the private and public virtues of the Franks, with a partial enthusiasm, which cannot be sufficiently justified by their domestic annals.[p] He celebrates their politeness and urbanity, their regular government, and orthodox religion; and boldly asserts, that these barbarians could be distinguished only by their dress and language from the subjects of Rome. Perhaps the Franks already displayed the social disposition, and lively graces, which in every age have disguised their vices, and sometimes concealed their intrinsic merit. Perhaps Agathias, and the Greeks, were dazzled by the rapid progress of their arms, and splendour of their empire.

of Procopius (de Bell. Gothic. l. iii, cap. 33, in tom. ii, p. 41), would almost suffice to justify the Abbé Dubos.

[o] The Franks, who probably used the mints of Treves, Lyons, and Arles, imitated the coinage of the Roman emperors of seventy-two *solidi*, or pieces, to the pound of gold. But as the Franks established only a decuple proportion of gold and silver, ten shillings will be a sufficient valuation of their solidus of gold. It was the common standard of the barbaric fines, and contained forty *denarii*, or silver threepences. Twelve of these denarii made a *solidus* or shilling, the twentieth part of the ponderal and numeral *livre*, or pound of silver, which has been so strangely reduced in modern France. See Le Blanc Traite Historique des Monnoyes de France, p. 37-43, &c.

[p] Agathias, in tom. ii, p. 47. Gregory of Tours exhibits a very different picture. Perhaps it would not be easy, within the same historical space, to find more vice and less virtue. We are continually shocked by the union of savage and corrupt manners.

Since the conquest of Burgundy, Gaul, except the Gothic province of Septimania, was subject, in its whole extent, to the sons of Clovis. They had extinguished the German kingdom of Thuringia, and their vague dominion penetrated beyond the Rhine, into the heart of their native forests. The Alemanni, and Bavarians, who had occupied the Roman provinces of Rhætia and Noricum, to the south of the Danube, confessed themselves the humble vassals of the Franks; and the feeble barrier of the Alps was incapable of resisting their ambition. When the last survivor of the sons of Clovis united the inheritance and conquests of the Merovingians, his kingdom extended far beyond the limits of modern France. Yet modern France, such has been the progress of arts and policy, far surpasses in wealth, populousness, and power, the spacious but savage realms of Clotaire or Dagobert.[q] CHAP. XXXVIII.

The Franks, or French, are the only people of Europe who can deduce a perpetual succession from the conquerors of the western empire. But their conquest of Gaul was followed by ten centuries of anarchy and ignorance. On the revival of learning, the students who had been formed in the schools of Athens and Rome, disdained their barbarian ancestors; and a long period elapsed before patient labour could pro- Political controversy.

[q] M. de Foucemagne has traced, in a correct and elegan dissertation (Mem. de l'Academie, tom. viii, p. 505-528), the extent and limits of the French monarchy.

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vide the requisite materials to satisfy, or rather to excite, the curiosity of more enlightened times.[r] At length the eye of criticism and philosophy was directed to the antiquities of France; but even philosophers have been tainted by the contagion of prejudice and passion. The most extreme and exclusive systems of the personal servitude of the Gauls, or of their voluntary and equal alliance with the Franks, have been rashly conceived, and obstinately defended: and the intemperate disputants have accused each other of conspiring against the prerogative of the crown, the dignity of the nobles, or the freedom of the people. Yet the sharp conflict has usefully exercised the adverse powers of learning and genius; and each antagonist, alternately vanquished and victorious, has extirpated some ancient errors, and established some interesting truths. An impartial stranger, instructed by their discoveries, their disputes, and even their faults, may describe, from the same original materials, the state of the Roman provincials, after Gaul had submitted to the arms and laws of the Merovingian kings.[s]

[r] The Abbé Dubos (Histoire Critique, tom. i, p. 29-36) has truly and agreeably represented the slow progress of these studies; and he observes, that Gregory of Tours was only once printed before the year 1560. According to the complaint of Heineccius (Opera, tom. iii, Sylloge iii, p. 248, &c.), Germany received with indifference and contempt the codes of barbaric laws, which were published by Heroldus, Lindenbrogius, &c. At present those laws (as far as they relate to Gaul), the history of Gregory of Tours, and all the monuments of the Merovingian race, appear in a pure and perfect state, in the first four volumes of the historians of France.

[s] In the space of thirty years, (1728-1765) this interesting sub-

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Laws of the barbarians.

The rudest, or the most servile, condition of human society, is regulated, however, by some fixed and general rules. When Tacitus surveyed the primitive simplicity of the Germans, he discovered some permanent maxims, or customs, of public and private life, which were preserved by faithful tradition, till the introduction of the art of writing, and of the Latin tongue.[t] Before the election of the Merovingian kings, the most powerful tribe, or nation, of the Franks, appointed four venerable chieftains to compose the *Salic* laws;[u] and their labours were examined and approved in three successive assemblies of the people. After the baptism of Clovis, he reformed several articles that appeared incompatible with Christianity: the Salic law

ject has been agitated by the free spirit of the Count de Boulainvilliers (Memoires Historiques sur l'Etat de la France, particularly tom. i, p. 15-49); the learned ingenuity of the Abbé Dubos (Histoire Critique de l'Establissement de la Monarchie Françoise dans les Gauls, 2 vols in 4to); the comprehensive genius of the president de Montesquieu (Esprit des Loix, particularly l. xxviii, xxx, xxxi), and the good sense and diligence of the Abbé de Mably (Observations sur l'Histoire de France, 2 vols. 12mo).

[t] I have derived much instruction from two learned works of Heineccius, the *History*, and the *Elements*, of the Germanic law. In a judicious preface to the Elements, he considers, and tries to excuse, the defects of that barbarous jurisprudence.

[u] Latin appears to have been the original language of the Salic law. It was probably composed in the beginning of the fifth century, before the æra (A. D. 421) of the real or fabulous Pharamond. The preface mentions the four cantons which produced the four legislators; and many provinces, Franconia, Saxony, Hanover, Brabant, &c. have claimed them as their own. See an excellent Dissertation of Heineccius, de Lege Salicâ, tom. iii, Sylloge iii, p. 247-267.

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was again amended by his sons; and at length, under the reign of Dagobert, the code was revised and promulgated in its actual form, one hundred years after the establishment of the French monarchy. Within the same period, the customs of the *Ripuarians* were transcribed and published: and Charlemagne himself, the legislator of his age and country, had accurately studied the *two* national laws, which still prevailed among the Franks.[x] The same care was extended to their vassals; and the rude institutions of the *Alemanni* and *Bavarians* were diligently compiled and ratified by the supreme authority of the Merovingian kings. The *Visigoths* and *Burgundians*, whose conquests in Gaul preceded those of the Franks, shewed less impatience to attain one of the principal benefits of civilized society. Euric was the first of the Gothic princes who expressed in writing the manners and customs of his people; and the composition of the Burgundian laws was a measure of policy rather than of justice; to alleviate the yoke, and regain the affections, of their Gallic subjects.[y] Thus, by a singular coincidence, the Germans framed their artless institu-

[x] Eginhard, in Vit. Caroli Magni, c. 29, in tom. v, p. 100. By these two laws, most critics understand the Salic and the Ripuarian. The former extended from the Carbonarian forest to the Loire (tom. iv, p. 151); and the latter might be obeyed from the same forest to the Rhine (tom. iv, p. 222).

[y] Consult the ancient and modern prefaces of the several Codes, in the fourth volume of the Historians of France. The original

tions, at a time when the elaborate system of Roman jurisprudence was finally consummated. In the Salic laws, and the Pandects of Justinian, we may compare the first rudiments, and the full maturity, of civil wisdom; and whatever prejudices may be suggested in favour of barbarism, our calmer reflections will ascribe to the Romans the superior advantages, not only of science and reason, but of humanity and justice. Yet the laws of the barbarians were adapted to their wants and desires, their occupations and their capacity; and they all contributed to preserve the peace, and promote the improvements, of the society for whose use they were originally established. The Merovingians, instead of imposing an uniform rule of conduct on their various subjects, permitted each people, and each family of their empire, freely to enjoy their domestic institutions;[z] nor were the Romans excluded from the common benefits of this legal toleration.[a] The children embraced the *law* of

prologue to the Salic law, expresses (though in a foreign dialect) the genuine spirit of the Franks more forcibly than the ten books of Gregory of Tours.

[z] The Ripuarian law declares, and defines, this indulgence in favour of the plaintiff (tit. xxxi, in tom. iv, p. 240); and the same toleration is understood, or expressed, in all the codes, except that of the Visigoths of Spain. Tanta diversitas legum (says Agobard, in the ninth century) quanta non solum in regionibus, aut civitatibus, sed etiam in multis domibus habetur. Nam plerumque contingit ut simul eant aut sedeant quinque homines, et nullus eorum communem legem cum altero habeat (in tom. vi, p. 356). He foolishly proposes to introduce an uniformity of law as well as of faith.

[a] Inter Romanos negotia causarum Romanis legibus præcipimus terminari. Such are the words of a general constitution promulgated

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their parents, the wife that of her husband, the freedman that of his patron; and, in all cases, where the parties were of different nations, the plaintiff, or accuser, was obliged to follow the tribunal of the defendant, who may always plead a judicial presumption of right or innocence. A more ample latitude was allowed, if every citizen, in the presence of the judge, might declare the law under which he desired to live, and the national society to which he chose to belong. Such an indulgence would abolish the partial distinctions of victory; and the Roman provincials might patiently acquiesce in the hardships of their condition; since it depended on themselves to assume the privilege, if they dared to assert the character, of free and warlike barbarians.[b]

Pecuniary fines for homicide.

When justice inexorably requires the death of a murderer, each private citizen is fortified by the assurance, that the laws, the magistrate, and

by Clotaire, the son of Clovis, and sole monarch of the Franks (in tom. iv, p. 116), about the year 560.

[b] This liberty of choice has been aptly deduced (Esprit des Loix, l. xxviii, 2) from a constitution of Lothaire I, (Leg. Langobard. l. ii, tit. lvii, in Codex Lindebrog. p. 664); though the example is too recent and partial. From a various reading in the Salic law (tit. xliv, not xlv), the Abbé de Mably (tom. i, p. 290-293) has conjectured, that, at first, a *barbarian* only, and afterwards any *man* (consequently a Roman), might live according to the law of the Franks. I am sorry to offend this ingenious conjecture by observing, that the stricter sense (*barbarum*) is expressed in the reformed copy of Charlemagne; which is confirmed by the Royal and Wolfenbuttle MSS. The looser interpretation (*hominem*) is authorized only by the MS. of Fulda, from whence Heroldus published his edition. See the four original texts of the Salic law, in tom. iv, p. 147, 173, 196, 220.

the whole community, are the guardians of his personal safety. But in the loose society of the Germans, revenge was always honourable, and often meritorious; the independent warrior chastised, or vindicated, with his own hand, the injuries which he had offered, or received; and he had only to dread the resentment of the sons, and kinsmen, of the enemy, whom he had sacrificed to his selfish or angry passions. The magistrate, conscious of his weakness, interposed, not to punish, but to reconcile; and he was satisfied if he could persuade, or compel, the contending parties to pay, and to accept, the moderate fine which had been ascertained, as the price of blood.[c] The fierce spirit of the Franks would have opposed a more rigorous sentence; the same fierceness despised these ineffectual restraints: and when their simple manners had been corrupted by the wealth of Gaul, the public peace was continually violated by acts of hasty or deliberate guilt. In every just government, the same penalty is inflicted, or at least is imposed, for the murder of a peasant, or a prince. But the national inequality established by the Franks, in their criminal proceedings, was the last insult and abuse of con-

[c] In the heroic times of Greece, the guilt of murder was expiated by a pecuniary satisfaction to the family of the deceased (Feithius Antiquitat. Homeric. l. ii, c. 8). Heineccius, in his preface to the Elements to the Germanic Law, favourably suggests, that at Rome and Athens homicide was only punished with exile. It is true: but exile was a *capital* punishment for a citizen of Rome or Athens.

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quest.[d] In the calm moments of legislation they solemnly pronounced, that the life of a Roman was of smaller value than that of a barbarian. The *Antrustion*,[e] a name expressive of the most illustrious birth or dignity among the Franks, was appreciated at the sum of six hundred pieces of gold; while the noble provincial who was admitted to the king's table, might be legally murdered at the expence of three hundred pieces. Two hundred were deemed sufficient for a Frank of ordinary condition; but the meaner Romans were exposed to disgrace and danger by a trifling compensation of one hundred, or even fifty, pieces of gold. Had these laws been regulated by any principle of equity or reason, the public protection should have supplied in just proportion the want of personal strength. But the legislator had weighed in the scale, not of justice, but of policy, the loss of a soldier against that of a slave; the head of an insolent and rapacious barbarian was guarded by an heavy fine; and the slightest aid was af-

[d] This proportion is fixed by the Salic (tit. xliv, in tom. iv, p. 147), and the Ripuarian (tit. vii, xi, xxxvi, in tom. iv, p. 237, 241), laws: but the latter does not distinguish any difference of Romans. Yet the orders of the clergy are placed above the Franks themselves, and the Burgundians and Alemanni between the Franks and the Romans.

[e] The *Antrustiones, qui in truste Dominica, sunt, leudi, fideles*, undoubtedly represent the first order of Franks; but it is a question whether their rank was personal, or hereditary. The Abbé de Mably (tom. i, p. 334-347) is not displeased to mortify the pride of birth (Esprit, l. xxx, c. 25), by dating the origin of French nobility from the reign of Clotaire II, (A. D. 615.)

forded to the most defenceless subjects. Time insensibly abated the pride of the conquerors, and the patience of the vanquished; and the boldest citizen was taught by experience, that he might suffer more injuries than he could inflict. As the manners of the Franks became less ferocious, their laws were rendered more severe; and the Merovingian kings attempted to imitate the impartial rigour of the Visigoths and Burgundians.[f] Under the empire of Charlemagne, murder was universally punished with death; and the use of capital punishments has been liberally multiplied in the jurisprudence of modern Europe.[g] CHAP. XXXVIII.

The civil and military professions, which had been separated by Constantine, were again united by the barbarians. The harsh sound of the Teutonic appellations was mollified into the Latin titles of Duke, of Count, or of Prefect; and the same officer assumed, within his district, the command of the troops, and the administra- Judgments of God.

[f] See the Burgundian laws (tit. ii, in tom. iv, p. 257); the Code of the Visigoths (l. vi, tit. v, in tom. iv, p. 384), and the constitution of *Childebert*, not of Paris, but most evidently of Austrasia (in tom. iv, p. 112). Their premature severity was sometimes rash and excessive. Childebert condemned not only murderers but robbers: quomodo sine lege involavit, sine lege moriatur; and even the negligent judge was involved in the same sentence. The Visigoths abandoned an unsuccessful surgeon to the family of his deceased patient, ut quod de eo facere voluerint habeant potestatem (l. xi, tit. i, in tom. iv, p. 435).

[g] See in the sixth volume of the works of Heineccius, the Elementa Juris Germanici, l. ii, p. ii, N°. 261, 262, 280-283. Yet some vestiges of these pecuniary compositions for murder have been traced in Germany, as late as the sixteenth century.

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tion of justice.[h] But the fierce and illiterate chieftain was seldom qualified to discharge the duties of a judge, which require all the faculties of a philosophic mind, laboriously cultivated by experience and study; and his rude ignorance was compelled to embrace some simple, and visible, methods of ascertaining the cause of justice. In every religion, the Deity has been invoked to confirm the truth, or to punish the falsehood, of human testimony; but this powerful instrument was misapplied and abused, by the simplicity of the German legislators. The party accused might justify his innocence, by producing before their tribunal a number of friendly witnesses, who solemnly declared their belief, or assurance, that he was not guilty. According to the weight of the charge, this legal number of *compurgators* was multiplied; seventy-two voices were required to absolve an incendiary, or assassin: and when the chastity of a queen of France was suspected, three hundred gallant nobles swore, without hesitation, that the infant prince had been actually begotten by her deceased husband.[i] The sin and scandal of manifest and frequent perjuries engaged the magis-

[h] The whole subject of the Germanic judges, and their jurisdiction, is copiously treated by Heineccius (Element. Jur. Germ. l. iii, N°. 1-72). I cannot find any proof, that, under the Merovingian race, the *scabini*, or assessors, were chosen *by* the people.

[i] Gregor Turon. l. viii, c. 9, in tom. ii, p. 316. Montesquieu observes (Esprit des Loix, l. xxviii, c. 13), that the Salic law did not admit these *negative proofs* so universally established in the barbaric codes. Yet this obscure concubine (Fredegundis), who became the wife of the grandson of Clovis, must have followed the Salic law.

trates to remove these dangerous temptations; and to supply the defects of human testimony, by the famous experiments of fire and water. These extraordinary trials were so capriciously contrived, that, in some cases, guilt, and innocence in others, could not be proved without the interposition of a miracle. Such miracles were readily provided by fraud and credulity; the most intricate causes were determined by this easy and infallible method; and the turbulent barbarians, who might have disdained the sentence of the magistrate, submissively acquiesced in the judgment of God.[k] CHAP. XXXVIII.

Judicial combats.

But the trials by single combat gradually obtained superior credit and authority, among a warlike people, who could not believe, that a brave man deserved to suffer, or that a coward deserved to live.[l] Both in civil and criminal proceedings, the plaintiff, or accuser, the defendant, or even the witness, were exposed to mortal challenge from the antagonist who was destitute of legal proofs; and it was incumbent on them either to desert their cause, or publicly to maintain their honour, in the lists of battle. They fought either on foot or on horseback, according

[k] Muratori, in the Antiquities of Italy, has given two Dissertations (xxxviii, xxxix,) on the *judgments of God*. It was expected, that *fire* would not burn the innocent; and that the pure element of *water* would not allow the guilty to sink into its bosom.

[l] Montesquieu (Esprit des Loix, l. xxviii, c. 17) has condescended to explain and excuse "la maniere de penser de nos peres," on the subject of judicial combats. He follows this strange institution from the age of Gundobald to that of St Lewis: and the philosopher is sometimes lost in the legal antiquarian.

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to the custom of their nation;[m] and the decision of the sword, or lance, was ratified by the sanction of heaven, of the judge, and of the people. This sanguinary law was introduced into Gaul by the Burgundians; and their legislator Gundobald[n] condescended to answer the complaints and objections of his subject Avitus. "Is it "not true," said the king of Burgundy to the bishop, "that the event of national wars, and "private combats, is directed by the judgment "of God; and that his providence awards the "victory to the juster cause?" By such prevailing arguments, the absurd and cruel practice of judicial duels, which had been peculiar to some tribes of Germany, was propagated and established in all the monarchies of Europe, from Sicily to the Baltic. At the end of ten centuries, the reign of legal violence was not totally extinguished; and the ineffectual censures of saints, of popes, and of synods, may seem to prove, that the influence of superstition is weakened by its unnatural alliance with reason and

[m] In a memorable duel at Aix-la-Chapelle (A. D. 820), before the emperor Louis the Pious, his biographer observes, secundum legem propriam, utpote quia uterque Gothus erat, equestri pugnâ congressus est (Vit. Lud. Pii, c. 33, in tom. vi, p. 103). Ermoldus Nigellus (l. iii, 543-628, in tom. vi, p. 48-50), who describes the duel, admires the *ars nova* of fighting on horseback, which was unknown to the Franks.

[n] In his original edict, published at Lyons (A. D. 501), Gundobald establishes and justifies the use of judicial combat (Leg. Burgund. tit. xlv, in tom. ii, p. 267, 268). Three hundred years afterwards, Agobard, bishop of Lyons, solicited Lewis the Pious to abolish the law of an Arian tyrant (in tom. vi, p. 356-358). He relates the conversation of Gundobald and Avitus.

humanity. The tribunals were stained with the blood, perhaps, of innocent and respectable citizens; the law, which now favours the rich, then yielded to the strong; and the old, the feeble, and the infirm, were condemned, either to renounce their fairest claims and possessions, to sustain the dangers of an unequal conflict,[o] or to trust the doubtful aid of a mercenary champion. This oppressive jurisprudence was imposed on the provincials of Gaul, who complained of any injuries in their persons and property. Whatever might be the strength, or courage, of individuals, the victorious barbarians excelled in the love and exercise of arms; and the vanquished Roman was unjustly summoned to repeat, in his own person, the bloody contest, which had been already decided against his country.[p]

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A devouring host of one hundred and twenty thousand Germans had formerly passed the Rhine under the command of Ariovistus. One

Division of lands by the barbarians.

[o] "Accidit (says Agobard), ut non solum valentes viribus, sed "etiam infirmi et senes lacessantur ad pugnam, etiam pro vilissimis "rebus. Quibus foralibus certaminibus contingunt homicidia in-"justa; et crudeles ac perversi eventus judiciorum." Like a prudent rhetorician, he suppresses the legal privilege of hiring champions.

[p] Montesquieu (Esprit des Loix, xxviii, c. 14), who understands *why* the judicial combat was admitted by the Burgundians, Ripuarians, Alemanni, Bavarians, Lombards, Thuringians, Frisons, and Saxons, is satisfied (and Agobard seems to countenance the assertion) that it was not allowed by the Salic law. Yet the same custom, at least in cases of treason, is mentioned by Ermoldus Nigellus (l. iii, 543, in tom. vi, p. 46), and the anonymous biographer of Lewis the Pious (c. 46, in tom. vi, p. 112), as the "mos antiquus Franco-"rum, more Francis solito," &c. expressions too general to exclude the noblest of their tribes.

Part of the fertile lands of the Sequani was appropriated to their use; and the conqueror soon repeated his oppressive demand of another third, for the accommodation of a new colony of twenty-four thousand barbarians, whom he had invited to share the rich harvest of Gaul.[q] At the distance of five hundred years, the Visigoths and Burgundians, who revenged the defeat of Ariovistus, usurped the same unequal proportion of *two-thirds* of the subject lands. But this distribution, instead of spreading over the province, may be reasonably confined to the peculiar districts where the victorious people had been planted by their own choice, or by the policy of their leader. In these districts, each barbarian was connected by the ties of hospitality with some Roman provincial. To this unwelcome guest, the proprietor was compelled to abandon two-thirds of his patrimony: but the German, a shepherd, and a hunter, might sometimes content himself with a spacious range of wood and pasture, and resign the smallest, though most valuable, portion, to the toil of the industrious husbandman.[r] The silence of ancient and authentic testimony has encouraged an opi-

[q] Cæsar de Bell. Gall. l. i, c. 31, in tom. i, p. 213.

[r] The obscure hints of a division of lands occasionally scattered in the laws of the Burgundians (tit. liv. N°. 1, 2, in tom. iv, p. 271, 272), and Visigoths (l. x, tit. i, N°. 8, 9, 16, in tom. iv, p. 428, 429, 430), are skilfully explained by the president Montesquieu (Esprit des Loix, l. xxx, c. 7, 8, 9). I shall only add, that, among the Goths, the division seems to have been ascertained by the judgment of the neighbourhood; that the barbarians frequently usurped the remaining *third*, and that the Romans might recover their right, unless they were barred by a prescription of fifty years.

nion, that the rapine of the *Franks* was not moderated, or disguised, by the forms of a legal division; that they dispersed themselves over the provinces of Gaul, without order or controul; and that each victorious robber, according to his wants, his avarice, and his strength, measured with his sword the extent of his new inheritance. At a distance from their sovereign, the barbarians might indeed be tempted to exercise such arbitrary depredation; but the firm and artful policy of Clovis must curb a licentious spirit, which would aggravate the misery of the vanquished, whilst it corrupted the union and discipline of the conquerors. The memorable vase of Soissons is a monument, and a pledge, of the regular distribution of the Gallic spoils. It was the duty, and the interest, of Clovis, to provide rewards for a successful army, and settlements for a numerous people; without inflicting any wanton or superfluous injuries on the loyal catholics of Gaul. The ample fund, which he might lawfully acquire, of the imperial patrimony, vacant lands, and Gothic usurpations, would diminish the cruel necessity of seizure and confiscation; and the humble provincials would more patiently acquiesce in the equal and regular distribution of their loss.[*]

[*] It is singular enough, that the president de Montesquieu (Esprit des Loix, l. xxx, c. 7), and the Abbé de Mably (Observations, tom. i, p. 21, 22), agree in this strange supposition of arbitrary and private rapine. The Count de Boulainvilliers (Etat de la France, tom. i, p. 22, 23) shews a strong understanding, through a cloud of ignorance and prejudice.

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Domain and benefices of the Merovingians.

The wealth of the Merovingian princes consisted in their extensive domain. After the conquest of Gaul, they still delighted in the rustic simplicity of their ancestors; the cities were abandoned to solitude and decay; and their coins, their charters, and their synods, are still inscribed with the names of the villas, or rural palaces, in which they successively resided. One hundred and sixty of these *palaces*, a title which need not excite any unseasonable ideas of art or luxury, were scattered through the provinces of their kingdom; and if some might claim the honours of a fortress, the far greater part could be esteemed only in the light of profitable farms. The mansion of the long-haired kings was surrounded with convenient yards, and stables, for the cattle and the poultry; the garden was planted with useful vegetables; the various trades, the labours of agriculture, and even the arts of hunting and fishing, were exercised by servile hands, for the emolument of the sovereign; his magazines were filled with corn and wine, either for sale or consumption; and the whole administration was conducted by the strictest maxims of private economy.[t] This ample patrimony was appropriated to supply

[t] See the rustic edict, or rather code, of Charlemagne, which contains seventy distinct and minute regulations of that great monarch (in tom. v; p. 652-657). He requires an account of the horns and skins of the goats; allows his fish to be sold; and carefully directs that the larger villas (*Capitaneæ*) shall maintain one hundred hens and thirty geese; and the smaller (*Mansionales*) fifty hens and twelve geese. Mabillon (de Re Diplomaticâ) has investigated the names, the number, and the situation of the Merovingian villas.

the hospitable plenty of Clovis, and his successors; and to reward the fidelity of their brave companions, who, both in peace and war, were devoted to their personal service. Instead of an horse, or a suit of armour, each companion, according to his rank, or merit, or favour, was invested with a *benefice*, the primitive name, and most simple form, of the feudal possessions. These gifts might be resumed at the pleasure of the sovereign; and his feeble prerogative derived some support from the influence of his liberality. But this dependent tenure was gradually abolished[u] by the independent and rapacious nobles of France, who established the perpetual property, and hereditary succession, of their benefices; a revolution salutary to the earth, which had been injured, or neglected, by its precarious masters.[x] Besides these royal and beneficiary estates, a large proportion had been assigned, in the division of Gaul, of *allodial* and *Salic* lands: they were exempt from tribute, and the Salic lands were equally shared among the male descendants of the Franks.[y] CHAP. XXXVIII.

[u] From a passage of the Burgundian law (tit. i, N°. 4, in tom. iv, p. 257), it is evident, that a deserving son might expect to hold the lands which his father had received from the royal bounty of Gundobald. The Burgundians would firmly maintain their privilege, and their example might encourage the beneficiaries of France.

[x] The revolutions of the benefices and fiefs are clearly fixed by the Abbé de Mably. His accurate distinction of *times* gives him a merit to which even Montesquieu is a stranger.

[y] See the Salic law (tit. lxii, in tom. iv. p. 156). The origin and nature of these Salic lands, which in times of ignorance were perfectly understood, now perplex our most learned and sagacious critics.

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Private usurpations.

In the bloody discord, and silent decay of the Merovingian line, a new order of tyrants arose in the provinces, who, under the appellation of *Seniors*, or Lords, usurped a right to govern, and a license to oppress, the subjects of their peculiar territory. Their ambition might be checked by the hostile resistance of an equal; but the laws were extinguished; and the sacrilegious barbarians, who dared to provoke the vengeance of a saint or bishop,[z] would seldom respect the landmarks of a profane and defenceless neighbour. The common, or public, rights of nature, such as they had always been deemed by the Roman jurisprudence,[a] were severely restrained by the German conquerors, whose amusement, or rather passion, was the exercise of hunting. The vague dominion, which MAN has assumed over the wild inhabitants of the earth, the air, and the waters, was confined to some fortunate individuals of the human species. Gaul was again overspread with woods; and the animals, who were reserved for the use, or pleasure, of the lord, might ravage, with impunity, the fields of his industrious vassals. The chace was the sacred privilege of the nobles, and their domestic servants. Plebeian transgressors were

[z] Many of the two hundred and six miracles of St Martin (Greg. Turon. in Maximâ Bibliothecâ Patrum, tom. xi, p. 896-932) were repeatedly performed to punish sacrilege. Audite hæc omnes (exclaims the bishop of Tours), potestatem habentes, after relating, how some horses run mad, that had been turned into a sacred meadow.

[a] Heinec. Element. Jur. German. l. ii, p. 1, N°. 8.

legally chastised with stripes and imprisonment;[b] but in an age which admitted a slight composition for the life of a citizen, it was a capital crime to destroy a stag or a wild bull within the precincts of the royal forests.[c] CHAP. XXXVIII.

According to the maxims of ancient war, the conqueror became the lawful master of the enemy whom he had subdued and spared:[d] and the fruitful cause of personal slavery, which had been almost suppressed by the peaceful sovereignty of Rome, was again revived and multiplied by the perpetual hostilities of the independent barbarians. The Goth, the Burgundian, or the Frank, who returned from a successful expedition, dragged after him a long train of sheep, of oxen, and of human captives, whom he treated with the same brutal contempt. The youths of an elegant form and ingenuous aspect, Personal servitude.

[b] Jonas, bishop of Orleans (A. D. 821-826; Cave, Hist. Literaria, p. 443), censures the *legal* tyranny of the nobles. Pro feris, quas cura hominum non aluit, sed Deus in commune mortalibus ad utendum concessit, pauperes a potentioribus spoliantur, flagellantur, ergastulis detruduntur, et multa alia patiuntur. Hoc enim qui faciunt, *lege mundi* se facere juste posse contendant. De Institutione Laicorum, l. ii, c. 23, apud Thomassin, Discipline de l'Eglise, tom. iii, p. 1348.

[c] On a mere suspicion, Chundo, a chamberlain of Gontran, king of Burgundy, was stoned to death (Greg. Turon. l. x, c. 10, in tom. ii, p. 369). John of Salisbury (Polycrat. l. i, c. 4) asserts the rights of nature, and exposes the cruel practice of the twelfth century. See Heineccius, Elem. Jur. Germ. l. ii, p. 1, N°. 51-57.

[d] The custom of enslaving prisoners of war was totally extinguished in the thirteenth century, by the prevailing influence of Christianity; but it might be proved, from frequent passages of Gregory of Tours, &c. that it was practised, without censure, under the Merovingian race; and even Grotius himself (de Jure Belli et Pacis, l. iii, c. 7), as well as his commentator Barbeyrac, have laboured to reconcile it with the laws of nature and reason.

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were set apart for the domestic service; a doubtful situation, which alternately exposed them to the favourable, or cruel, impulse of passion. The useful mechanics and servants (smiths, carpenters, tailors, shoemakers, cooks, gardeners, dyers, and workmen in gold and silver, &c.) employed their skill for the use, or profit, of their master. But the Roman captives who were destitute of art, but capable of labour, were condemned, without regard to their former rank, to tend the cattle, and cultivate the lands, of the barbarians. The number of the hereditary bondsmen, who were attached to the Gallic estates, was continually increased by new supplies; and the servile people, according to the situation and temper of their lords, was sometimes raised by precarious indulgence, and more frequently depressed by capricious despotism.[e] An absolute power of life and death was exercised by these lords; and when they married their daughters, a train of useful servants, chained on the waggons to prevent their escape, was sent as a nuptial present into a distant country.[f] The majesty of the Roman laws protected the liberty of each citizen against the rash effects of

[e] The state, professions, &c. of the German, Italian, and Gallic slaves, during the middle ages, are explained by Heineccius (Element. Jur. Germ. l. i, N°. 28-47); Muratori (Dissertat. xiv, xv); Ducange (Gloss. sub voce *Servi*), and the Abbé de Mably (Observations, tom. ii, p. 3, &c. p. 237, &c.)

[f] Gregory of Tours (l. vi, c. 45, in tom. ii, p. 289) relates a memorable example, in which Chilperic only abused the private rights of a master. Many families, which belonged to his *domus fiscales* in the neighbourhood of Paris, were forcibly sent away into Spain.

his own distress, or despair. But the subjects of the Merovingian kings might alienate their personal freedom; and this act of legal suicide, which was familiarly practised, is expressed in terms most disgraceful and afflicting to the dignity of human nature.[s] The example of the poor, who purchased life by the sacrifice of all that can render life desirable, was gradually imitated by the feeble and the devout, who, in times of public disorder, pusillanimously crowded to shelter themselves under the battlements of a powerful chief, and around the shrine of a popular saint. Their submission was accepted by these temporal, or spiritual, patrons; and the hasty transaction irrecoverably fixed their own condition, and that of their latest posterity. From the reign of Clovis, during five successive centuries, the laws and manners of Gaul uniformly tended to promote the increase, and to confirm the duration, of personal servitude. Time and violence almost obliterated the intermediate ranks of society; and left an obscure and narrow interval between the noble and the slave. This arbitrary and recent division has been transformed by pride and prejudice into a *national* distinction, universally established by the arms and the laws of the Merovingians. The nobles, who claimed their genuine, or fabulous,

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[s] Licentiam habeatis mihi qualemcunque volueritis disciplinam ponere: vel venumdare, aut quod vobis placuerit de me facere. Marculf. Formul. l. ii, 28, in tom. iv, p. 497. The *Formula* of Lindenbrogius (p. 559) and that of Anjou (p. 565), are to the same effect. Gregory of Tours (l. vii, c. 45, in tom. ii, p. 311) speaks of many persons, who sold themselves for bread, in a great famine.

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descent, from the independent and victorious Franks, have asserted, and abused, the indefeasible right of conquest, over a prostrate crowd of slaves and plebeians, to whom they imputed the imaginary disgrace of a Gallic, or Roman, extraction.

Example of Auvergne.

The general state and revolutions of *France*, a name which was imposed by the conquerors, may be illustrated by the particular example of a province, a diocese, or a senatorial family. Auvergne had formerly maintained a just pre-eminence among the independent states and cities of Gaul. The brave and numerous inhabitants displayed a singular trophy; the sword of Cæsar himself, which he had lost when he was repulsed before the walls of Gergovia.[h] As the common offspring of Troy, they claimed a fraternal alliance with the Romans;[i] and if each province had imitated the courage and loyalty of Auvergne, the fall of the western empire might have been prevented, or delayed. They firmly maintained the fidelity which they had reluctantly sworn to the Visigoths; but when their bravest nobles had fallen in the battle of Poitiers, they accepted, without resistance, a victorious and catholic sovereign. This

[h] When Cæsar saw it, he laughed (Plutarch. in Cæsar. in tom. i, p. 709): yet he relates his unsuccessful siege of Gergovia with less frankness than we might expect from a great man to whom victory was familiar. He acknowledges, however, that in one attack he lost forty-six centurions and seven hundred men (de Bell. Gallico, l. vi, c. 44-53, in tom. p. 1. 270-272.)

[i] Audebant se quondam fratres Latio dicere, et sanguine ab Iliaco populos computare (Sidon. Apollinar. l. vii, epist. 7, in tom. i, p. 799). I am not informed of the degrees and circumstances of this fabulous pedigree.

easy and valuable conquest was achieved, and possessed, by Theodoric, the eldest son of Clovis: but the remote province was separated from his Austrasian dominions, by the intermediate kingdoms of Soissons, Paris, and Orleans, which formed, after their father's death, the inheritance of his three brothers. The king of Paris, Childebert, was tempted by the neighbourhood and beauty of Auvergne.[k] The upper country, which rises towards the south into the mountains of the Cevennes, presented a rich and various prospect of woods and pastures; the sides of the hills were clothed with vines; and each eminence was crowned with a villa or castle. In the Lower Auvergne, the river Allier flows through the fair and spacious plain of Limagne; and the inexhaustible fertility of the soil supplied, and still supplies, without any interval of repose, the constant repetition of the same harvests.[l] On the false report that their lawful sovereign had been slain in Germany, the city and diocese of Auvergne were betrayed by the grandson of Sidonius Apollinaris. Childebert enjoyed this clandestine victory; and

[k] Either the first, or second, partition among the sons of Clovis, had given Berry to Childebert (Greg. Turon. l. iii, c. 12, in tom. ii, p. 192.) Velim (said he) Arvernam *Lemanem*, quæ tantâ jocunditatis gratiâ refulgere dicitur oculis cernere (l. iii, c. 9, p. 191). The face of the country was concealed by a thick fog, when the king of Paris made his entry into Clermont.

[l] For the description of Auvergne, see Sidonius (l. iv, epist. 21, in tom. i, p. 793), with the notes of Savaron and Sirmond (p. 279 and 51 of their respective editions). Boulainvilliers (Etat de la France, tom. ii, p. 242-268), and the Abbé de la Longuerue (Description de la France, part i, p. 132-139).

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the free subjects of Theodoric threatened to desert his standard, if he indulged his private resentment, while the nation was engaged in the Burgundian war. But the Franks of Austrasia soon yielded to the persuasive eloquence of their king. "Follow me," said Theodoric, "into Auvergne: I will lead you into a province, "where you may acquire gold, silver, slaves, "cattle, and precious apparel, to the full extent "of your wishes. I repeat my promise; I give "you the people, and their wealth, as your prey; "and you may transport them at pleasure into "your own country." By the execution of this promise, Theodoric justly forfeited the allegiance of a people, whom he devoted to destruction. His troops, reinforced by the fiercest barbarians of Germany,[m] spread desolation over the fruitful face of Auvergne; and two places only, a strong castle, and a holy shrine, were saved, or redeemed, from their licentious fury. The castle of Meroliac[n] was seated on a lofty rock, which rose an hundred feet above the surface of the plain; and a large reservoir of fresh water was inclosed, with some arable lands, with-

[m] Furorem gentium, quæ de ulteriore Rheni amnis parte venerant, superare non poterat (Greg. Turon. l. iv, c. 50, in tom. ii, 229), was the excuse of another king of Austrasia (A. D. 574), for the ravages which his troops committed in the neighbourhood of Paris.

[n] From the name and situation, the Benedictine editors of Gregory of Tours (in tom. ii, p. 192), have fixed this fortress at a place named *Castel Merliac*, two miles from Mauriac, in the upper Auvergne. In this description, I translate *infra* as if I read *intra*; the two prepositions are perpetually confounded by Gregory, or his transcribers; and the sense must always decide.

in the circle of its fortifications. The Franks beheld with envy and despair this impregnable fortress: but they surprised a party of fifty stragglers; and, as they were oppressed by the number of their captives, they fixed, at a trifling ransom, the alternative of life or death for these wretched victims, whom the cruel barbarians were prepared to massacre on the refusal of the garrison. Another detachment penetrated as far as Brivas, or Brioude, where the inhabitants, with their valuable effects, had taken refuge in the sanctuary of St Julian. The doors of the church resisted the assault; but a daring soldier entered through a window of the choir, and opened a passage to his companions. The clergy and people, the sacred and the profane spoils, were rudely torn from the altar; and the sacrilegious division was made at a small distance from the town of Brioude. But this act of impiety was severely chastised by the devout son of Clovis. He punished with death the most atrocious offenders; left their secret accomplices to the vengeance of St Julian; released the captives; restored the plunder; and extended the rights of sanctuary, five miles round the sepulchre of the holy martyr.[o] CHAP. XXXVIII.

Before the Austrasian army retreated from Auvergne, Theodoric exacted some pledges of the Story of Attalus.

[o] See these revolutions, and wars, of Auvergne in Gregory of Tours (l. ii, c. 37, in tom. ii, p. 183, and l. iii, c. 9, 12, 13, p. 191, 192, de Miraculis St Julian. c. 13, in tom. ii, p. 466). He frequently betrays his extraordinary attention to his native country.

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future loyalty of a people, whose just hatred could be restrained only by their fear. A select band of noble youths, the sons of the principal senators, was delivered to the conqueror, as the hostages of the faith of Childebert, and of their countrymen. On the first rumour of war, or conspiracy, these guiltless youths were reduced to a state of servitude; and one of them, Attalus,[p] whose adventures are more particularly related, kept his master's horses in the diocese of Treves. After a painful search he was discovered, in this unworthy occupation, by the emissaries of his grandfather, Gregory bishop of Langres; but his offers of ransom were sternly rejected by the avarice of the barbarian, who required an exorbitant sum of ten pounds of gold for the freedom of his noble captive. His deliverance was effected by the hardy stratagem of Leo, a slave belonging to the kitchens of the bishop of Langres.[q]

[p] The story of Attalus is related by Gregory of Tours (l. iii, c, 16, in tom. ii, p. 193–195). His editor, the P. Ruinart, confounds this Attalus, who was a youth (*puer*) in the year 532, with a friend of Sidonius of the same name, who was count of Autun, fifty or sixty years before. Such an error, which cannot be imputed to ignorance, is excused, in some degree, by its own magnitude.

[q] This Gregory, the great grandfather of Gregory of Tours (in tom. ii, p. 197, 490), lived ninety-two years; of which he passed forty as count of Autun, and thirty-two as bishop of Langres. According to the poet Fortunatus, he displayed equal merit in these different stations.

Nobilis antiquâ decurrens prole parentum,
Nobilior gestis, nunc super astra manet.
Arbiter ante ferox, dein pius ipse sacerdos,
Quos domuit judex, fovet amore patris.

An unknown agent easily introduced him into the same family. The barbarian purchased Leo for the price of twelve pieces of gold; and was pleased to learn, that he was deeply skilled in the luxury of an episcopal table. "Next "Sunday," said the Frank, "I shall invite my "neighbours and kinsmen. Exert thy art, and "force them to confess, that they have never "seen, or tasted, such an entertainment, even in "the king's house." Leo assured him, that if he would provide a sufficient quantity of poultry, his wishes should be satisfied. The master, who already aspired to the merit of elegant hospitality, assumed, as his own, the praise which the voracious guests unanimously bestowed on his cook; and the dexterous Leo insensibly acquired the trust and management of his household. After the patient expectation of a whole year, he cautiously whispered his design to Attalus, and exhorted him to prepare for flight in the ensuing night. At the hour of midnight, the intemperate guests retired from table; and the Frank's son-in-law, whom Leo attended to his apartment with a nocturnal potation, condescended to jest on the facility with which he might betray his trust. The intrepid slave, after sustaining this dangerous raillery, entered his master's bed-chamber; removed his spear and shield; silently drew the fleetest horses from the stable; unbarred the ponderous gates; and excited Attalus to save his life and liberty by incessant diligence. Their apprehensions urged them to leave their horses

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on the banks of the Meuse;[r] they swam the river, wandered three days in the adjacent forest, and subsisted only by the accidental discovery of a wild plum-tree. As they lay concealed in a dark thicket, they heard the noise of horses; they were terrified by the angry countenance of their master, and they anxiously listened to his declaration, that, if he could seize the guilty fugitives, one of them he would cut in pieces with his sword, and would expose the other on a gibbet. At length, Attalus, and his faithful Leo, reached the friendly habitation of a presbyter of Rheims, who recruited their fainting strength with bread and wine, concealed them from the search of their enemy, and safely conducted them, beyond the limits of the Austrasian kingdom, to the episcopal palace of Langres. Gregory embraced his grandson with tears of joy, gratefully delivered Leo, with his whole family, from the yoke of servitude, and bestowed on him the property of a farm, where he might end his days in happiness and freedom. Perhaps this singular adventure, which is marked with so many circumstances of truth and nature, was related by Attalus himself, to his cousin, or nephew, the first historian of the Franks. Gregory of Tours[s] was born

[r] As M. de Valois, and the P. Ruinart, are determined to change the *Mosella* of the text into *Mosa*, it becomes me to acquiesce in the alteration. Yet, after some examination of the topography, I could defend the common reading.

[s] The parents of Gregory (Gregorius Florentius Georgius) were of noble extraction, (*natalibus . . . illustres*), and they possessed large estates (*latifundia*) both in Auvergne and Burgundy. He was

about sixty years after the death of Sidonius Apollinaris; and their situation was almost similar, since each of them was a native of Auvergne, a senator, and a bishop. The difference of their style and sentiments may, therefore, express the decay of Gaul; and clearly ascertain how much, in so short a space, the human mind had lost of its energy and refinement.[1] CHAP. XXXVIII.

We are now qualified to despise the opposite, and, perhaps, artful, misrepresentations, which have softened, or exaggerated, the oppression of the Romans of Gaul under the reign of the Merovingians. The conquerors never promulgated any *universal* edict of servitude, or confiscation: but a degenerate people, who excused their weakness by the specious names of politeness and peace, was exposed to the arms and laws of the ferocious barbarians, who contemptuously insulted their possessions, their freedom, and their safety. Their personal injuries were partial and irregular; but the great body of the Romans Privileges of the Romans of Gaul.

born in the year 539, was consecrated bishop of Tours in 573, and died in 593, or 595, soon after he had terminated his history. See his life by Odo, abbot of Clugny (in tom. ii, p. 129-135), and a new Life in the Memoires de l'Academie, &c. tom. xxvi, p. 598-637.

[1] Decedente atque immo potius pereunte ab urbibus Gallicanis liberalium culturâ literarum, &c. (in præfat. in tom. ii, p. 187), is the complaint of Gregory himself, which he fully verifies by his own work. His style is equally devoid of elegance and simplicity. In a conspicuous station he still remained a stranger to his own age and country; and in a prolix work (the five last books contain ten years) he has omitted almost every thing that posterity desires to learn. I have tediously acquired, by a painful perusal, the right of pronouncing this unfavourable sentence.

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survived the revolution, and still preserved the property, and privileges, of citizens. A large portion of their lands was exacted for the use of the Franks: but they enjoyed the remainder, exempt from tribute;[u] and the same irresistible violence which swept away the arts and manufactures of Gaul, destroyed the elaborate and expensive system of imperial despotism. The provincials must frequently deplore the savage jurisprudence of the Salic or Ripuarian laws; but their private life, in the important concerns of marriage, testaments, or inheritance, was still regulated by the Theodosian Code; and a discontented Roman might freely aspire, or descend, to the title and character of a barbarian. The honours of the state were accessible to his ambition: the education and temper of the Romans more peculiarly qualified them for the offices of civil government; and, as soon as emulation had rekindled their military ardour, they were permitted to march in the ranks, or even at the head, of the victorious Germans. I shall not attempt to enumerate the generals and magistrates, whose names[x] attest the liberal policy

[u] The Abbé de Mably (tom. i, p. 247-267) has diligently confirmed this opinion of the president de Montesquieu (Esprit des Loix, l. xxx, c. 13).

[x] See Dubos, Hist. Critique de la Monarchie Françoise, tom. ii, l. vi, c. 9, 10. The French antiquarians establish as a *principle*, that the Romans and barbarians may be distinguished by their names. Their names undoubtedly form a reasonable *presumption*; yet in reading Gregory of Tours, I have observed Gondulphus, of senatorian or Roman extraction (l. vi, c. 11, in tom. ii, p. 273), and Claudius, a barbarian (l. vii, c. 29, p. 303).

of the Merovingians. The supreme command of Burgundy, with the title of Patrician, was successively intrusted to the three Romans; and the last, and most powerful, Mummolus,[y] who alternately saved and disturbed the monarchy, had supplanted his father in the station of count of Autun, and left a treasure of thirty talents of gold, and two hundred and fifty talents of silver. The fierce and illiterate barbarians were excluded, during several generations, from the dignities, and even from the orders, of the church.[z] The clergy of Gaul consisted almost entirely of native provincials; the haughty Franks fell prostrate at the feet of their subjects, who were dignified with the episcopal character; and the power and riches which had been lost in war were insensibly recovered by superstition.[a] In all temporal affairs, the Theodosian Code was the universal law of the clergy; but the barbaric jurisprudence had liberally provided for their personal safety: a sub-deacon was equivalent to two Franks; the *antrustion*, and priest, were held in similar estimation; and the life of a bishop was appreciated far above the common

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[y] Eunius Mummolus is repeatedly mentioned by Gregory of Tours, from the fourth (c. 42, p. 224) to the seventh (c. 40, p. 310) book. The computation by talents is singular enough; but if Gregory attached any meaning to that obsolete word, the treasures of Mummolus must have exceeded 100,000l. sterling.

[z] See Fleury, Discours iii, sur l'Histoire Ecclesiastique.

[a] The bishop of Tours himself has recorded the complaint of Chilperic, the grandson of Clovis. Ecce pauper remansit Fiscus noster; ecce divitiæ nostræ ad ecclesias sunt translatæ: nulli penitus nisi soli Episcopi regnant (l. vi, c. 46, in tom. ii, p. 291.).

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standard, at the price of nine hundred pieces of gold.[b] The Romans communicated to their conquerors the use of the christian religion and Latin language:[c] but their language and their religion had alike degenerated from the simple purity of the Augustan, and Apostolic, age. The progress of superstition and barbarism was rapid and universal: the worship of the saints concealed from vulgar eyes the God of the Christians; and the rustic dialect of peasants and soldiers was corrupted by a Teutonic idiom and pronunciation. Yet such intercourse of sacred and social communion eradicated the distinctions of birth and victory; and the nations of Gaul were gradually confounded under the name and government of the Franks.

Anarchy of the Franks.

The Franks, after they mingled with their Gallic subjects, might have imparted the most valuable of human gifts, a spirit, and system, of constitutional liberty. Under a king hereditary but limited, the chiefs and counsellors might

[b] See the Ripuarian Code (tit. xxxvi, in tom. iv, p. 241). The Salic law does not provide for the safety of the clergy, and we might suppose, on the behalf of the more civilized tribe, that they had not foreseen such an impious act as the murder of a priest. Yet Prætextatus, archbishop of Rouen, was assassinated by the order of Queen Fredegundis before the altar (Greg. Turon. l. viii, c. 31, in tom. ii, p. 326).

[c] M. Bonamy (Mem. de l'Academie des Inscriptions, tom. xxiv, p. 582-670) has ascertained the *Lingua Romana Rustica*, which, through the medium of the *Romance*, has gradually been polished into the actual form of the French language. Under the Carlovingian race, the kings and nobles of France still understood the dialect of their German ancestors.

have debated, at Paris, in the palace of the Cæsars: the adjacent field, where the emperors reviewed their mercenary legions, would have admitted the legislative assembly of freemen and warriors; and the rude model, which had been sketched in the woods of Germany,[d] might have been polished and improved by the civil wisdom of the Romans. But the careless barbarians, secure of their personal independence, disdained the labour of government: the annual assemblies of the month of March were silently abolished; and the nation was separated, and almost dissolved, by the conquest of Gaul.[e] The monarchy was left without any regular establishment of justice, of arms, or of revenue. The successors of Clovis wanted resolution to assume, or strength to exercise, the legislative and executive powers, which the people had abdicated: the royal prerogative was distinguished only by a more ample privilege of rapine and murder; and the love of freedom, so often invigorated and disgraced by private ambition, was reduced, among the licentious Franks, to the contempt of order, and the desire of impunity. Seventy-five years after the death of Clovis, his grandson, Gontran, king of Burgundy, sent an army to invade the Gothic possessions of Septimania, or Languedoc. The

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[d] Ce beau systeme a été trové dans les bois. Montesquieu, Esprit des Loix, l. xi, c. 6.

[e] See the Abbé de Mably, Observations, &c. tom. i, p. 34-36. It should seem that the institution of national assemblies, which are coëval with the French nation, have never been congenial to its temper.

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troops of Burgundy, Berry, Auvergne, and the adjacent territories, were excited by the hopes of spoil. They marched without discipline, under the banners of German, or Gallic, counts; their attack was feeble and unsuccessful; but the friendly and hostile provinces were desolated with indiscriminate rage. The corn fields, the villages, the churches themselves, were consumed by fire; the inhabitants were massacred or dragged into captivity; and in the disorderly retreat, five thousand of these inhuman savages were destroyed by hunger or intestine discord. When the pious Gontran reproached the guilt, or neglect, of their leaders, and threatened to inflict not a legal sentence, but instant and arbitrary execution, they accused the universal and incurable corruption of the people. "No one," they said, "any longer fears or respects his king, "his duke, or his count. Each man loves to do "evil, and freely indulges his criminal inclina- "tions. The most gentle correction provokes an "immediate tumult, and the rash magistrate, who "presumes to censure or restrain his seditious "subjects, seldom escapes alive from their re- "venge."[f] It has been reserved for the same

[f] Gregory of Tours (l. viii, c. 30, in tom. ii, p. 325, 326) relates, with much indifference, the crimes, the reproof, and the apology. Nullus Regem metuit, nullus Ducem, nullus Comitem reveretur; et si fortassis alicui ista displicent, et ea, pro longævitate vitæ vestræ, emendare conatur, statim seditio in populo, statim tumultus exoritur, et in tantum unusquisque contra seniorem, sævâ intentione grassatur, ut vix se credat evadere, si tandem silere nequiverit.

nation to expose, by their intemperate vices, the most odious abuse of freedom; and to supply its loss by the spirit of honour and humanity, which now alleviates and dignifies their obedience to an absolute sovereign. CHAP. XXXVIII.

The Visigoths had resigned to Clovis the greatest part of their Gallic possessions; but their loss was amply compensated by the easy conquest, and secure enjoyment, of the provinces of Spain. From the monarchy of the Goths, which soon involved the Suevic kingdom of Gallicia, the modern Spaniards still derive some national vanity: but the historian of the Roman Empire is neither invited, nor compelled, to pursue the obscure and barren series of their annals.[s] The Goths of Spain were separated from the rest of mankind, by the lofty ridge of the Pyrenæan mountains: their manners and institutions, as far as they were common to the Germanic tribes, have been already explained. I have anticipated, in the preceding chapter, the most important of their ecclesiastical events, the fall of Arianism, and the persecution of the Jews: and it only remains to observe some interesting circumstances, which relate to the civil and ecclesiastical constitution of the Spanish kingdom. The Visigoths of Spain.

After their conversion from idolatry or heresy, the Franks and the Visigoths were disposed to Legislative assemblies of Spain.

[s] Spain, in these dark ages, has been peculiarly unfortunate. The Franks had a Gregory of Tours; the Saxons, or Angles, a Bede; the Lombards, a Paul Warnefrid, &c. But the history of the Visigoths is contained in the short and imperfect chronicles of Isidore of Seville, and John of Biclar.

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embrace, with equal submission, the inherent evils, and the accidental benefits, of superstition. But the prelates of France, long before the extinction of the Merovingian race, had degenerated into fighting and hunting barbarians. They disdained the use of synods; forgot the laws of temperance and chastity; and preferred the indulgence of private ambition and luxury, to the general interest of the sacerdotal profession.[h] The bishops of Spain respected themselves, and were respected by the public: their indissoluble union disguised their vices, and confirmed their authority: and the regular discipline of the church introduced peace, order, and stability, into the government of the state. From the reign of Recared, the first catholic king, to that of Witiza, the immediate predecessor of the unfortunate Roderic, sixteen national councils were successively convened. The six metropolitans, Toledo, Seville, Merida, Braga, Tarragona, and Narbonne, presided according to their respective seniority; the assembly was composed of their suffragan bishops, who appeared in person, or by their proxies; and a place was assigned to the most holy or opulent of the Spanish abbots. During the first three days of the convocation, as long as they agitated the ecclesiastical questions of doctrine and discipline, the profane laity was excluded from

[h] Such are the complaints of St Boniface, the apostle of Germany and the reformer of Gaul (in tom. iv, p. 94). The fourscore years, which he deplores, of licence and corruption, would seem to insinuate, that the barbarians were admitted into the clergy about the year 660.

their debates; which were conducted, however, with decent solemnity. But on the morning of the fourth day, the doors were thrown open for the entrance of the great officers of the palace, the dukes and counts of the provinces, the judges of the cities, and the Gothic nobles; and the decrees of heaven were ratified by the consent of the people. The same rules were observed in the provincial assemblies, the annual synods which were empowered to hear complaints, and to redress grievances; and a legal government was supported by the prevailing influence of the Spanish clergy. The bishops, who, in each revolution, were prepared to flatter the victorious, and to insult the prostrate, laboured with diligence and success, to kindle the flames of persecution, and to exalt the mitre above the crown. Yet the national councils of Toledo, in which the free spirit of the barbarians was tempered and guided by episcopal policy, have established some prudent laws for the common benefit of the king and people. The vacancy of the throne was supplied by the choice of the bishops and palatines; and, after the failure of the line of Alaric, the regal dignity was still limited to the pure and noble blood of the Goths. The clergy, who anointed their lawful prince, always recommended, and sometimes practised, the duty of allegiance; and the spiritual censures were denounced on the heads of the impious subjects, who should resist his authority, conspire against his life, or violate, by an indecent union, the chastity even of his widow. But the monarch

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himself, when he ascended the throne, was bound, by a reciprocal oath to God and his people, that he would faithfully execute his important trust. The real or imaginary faults of his administration were subject to the controul of a powerful aristocracy: and the bishops and palatines were guarded by a fundamental privilege, that they should not be degraded, imprisoned, tortured, nor punished with death, exile, or confiscation, unless by the free and public judgment of their peers.[1]

Code of the Visigoths.

One of these legislative councils of Toledo examined and ratified the code of laws which had been compiled by a succession of Gothic kings, from the fierce Euric, to the devout Egica. As long as the Visigoths themselves were satisfied with the rude customs of their ancestors, they indulged their subjects of Aquitain and Spain in the enjoyment of the Roman law. Their gradual improvement in arts, in policy, and at length in religion, encouraged them to imitate, and to supersede, these foreign institutions; and to compose a code of civil and criminal jurisprudence, for the use of a great and united people. The same obligations, and the same privileges, were communicated to the nations of the Spanish monarchy: and the conquerors, insensibly renoun-

[1] The acts of the councils of Toledo are still the most authentic records of the church and constitution of Spain. The following passages are particularly important (iii, 17, 18; iv, 75; v, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8; vi, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, 8; vii, 1; xiii, 2, 3, 6). I have found Mascou (Hist. of the ancient Germans, xv, 29, and Annotations, xxvi, and xxxiii), and Ferreras (Hist. Generale de l'Espagne, tom. ii), very useful and accurate guides.

cing the Teutonic idiom, submitted to the restraints of equity, and exalted the Romans to the participation of freedom. The merit of this impartial policy was enhanced by the situation of Spain, under the reign of the Visigoths. The provincials were long separated from their Arian masters by the irreconcileable difference of religion. After the conversion of Recared had removed the prejudices of the catholics, the coasts, both of the Ocean and Mediterranean, were still possessed by the eastern emperors; who secretly excited a discontented people to reject the yoke of the barbarians, and to assert the name and dignity of Roman citizens. The allegiance of doubtful subjects is indeed most effectually secured by their own persuasion, that they hazard more in a revolt, than they can hope to obtain by revolution; but it has appeared so natural to oppress those whom we hate and fear, that the contrary system well deserves the praise of wisdom and moderation.[k] CHAP. XXXVIII.

Revolution of Britain.

While the kingdoms of the Franks and Visigoths were established in Gaul and Spain, the Saxons achieved the conquest of Britain, the third great diocese of the prefecture of the West. Since Britain was already separated from the Ro-

[k] The Code of the Visigoths, regularly divided into twelve books, has been correctly published by Dom Bouquet (in tom. iv, p. 273-460). It has been treated by the president de Montesquieu (Esprit des Loix, l. xxviii, c. 1) with excessive severity. I dislike the style; I detest the superstition; but I shall presume to think, that the civil jurisprudence displays a more civilized and enlightened state of society, than that of the Burgundians, or even of the Lombards.

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man empire, I might, without reproach, decline a story familiar to the most illiterate, and obscure to the most learned, of my readers. The Saxons, who excelled in the use of the oar, or the battle-axe, were ignorant of the art which could alone perpetuate the fame of their exploits: the provincials, relapsing into barbarism, neglected to describe the ruin of their country: and the doubtful tradition was almost extinguished, before the missionaries of Rome restored the light of science and Christianity. The declamations of Gildas, the fragments, or fables, of Nennius, the obscure hints of the Saxon laws and chronicles, and the ecclesiastical tales of the venerable Bede,[l] have been illustrated by the diligence, and sometimes embellished by the fancy, of succeeding writers, whose works I am not ambitious either to censure or to transcribe.[m] Yet the historian of the empire may be tempted to pursue the revolutions of a Roman province, till it vanishes from his sight; and an Englishman may curiously trace the establishment of the barbarians, from whom he derives his name, his laws, and perhaps his origin.

[l] See Gildas de Excidio Britanniæ, c. 11-25, p. 4-9, edit. Gale: Nennius Hist. Britonum, c. 28, 35-65, p. 105-115, edit. Gale; Bede Hist. Ecclesiast. Gentis Anglorum, l. i, c. 12-16, p. 49-53; c. 22, p. 58, edit. Smith: Chron. Saxonicum, p. 11-23, &c. edit. Gibson. The Anglo-Saxon laws were published by Wilkins, London, 1731, in folio; and the Leges Wallicæ, by Wotton and Clarke, London, 1730, in folio.

[m] The laborious Mr Carte, and the ingenious Mr Whitaker, are the two modern writers to whom I am principally indebted. The particular historian of Manchester embraces, under that obscure title, a subject almost as extensive as the general history of England.

About forty years after the dissolution of the Roman government, Vortigern appears to have obtained the supreme, though precarious, command of the princes and cities of Britain. That unfortunate monarch has been almost unanimously condemned for the weak and mischievous policy of inviting[n] a formidable stranger, to repel the vexatious inroads of a domestic foe. His ambassadors are dispatched, by the gravest historians, to the coast of Germany; they address a pathetic oration to the general assembly of the Saxons, and those warlike barbarians resolve to assist with a fleet and army the suppliants of a distant and unknown island. If Britain had indeed been unknown to the Saxons, the measure of its calamities would have been less complete. But the strength of the Roman government could not always guard the maritime province against the pirates of Germany: the independent and divided states were exposed to their attacks; and the Saxons might sometimes join the Scots and the Picts, in a tacit, or express, confederacy of rapine and destruction. Vortigern could only balance the various perils, which assaulted on every side his throne and his people; and his policy may deserve either praise or excuse, if he preferred the alliance of *those* barbarians, whose na-

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Descent of the Saxons, A. D. 449.

[n] This *invitation*, which may derive some countenance from the loose expressions of Gildas and Bede, is framed into a regular story by Witikind, a Saxon monk of the tenth century (See Cousin, Hist. de l'Empire d'Occident, tom. ii, p. 356). Rapin, and even Hume, have too freely used this suspicious evidence, without regarding the precise and probable testimony of Nennius: Interea venerunt tres Chiulæ a Germaniâ *in exilio pulsæ*, in quibus erant Hors et Hengist.

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val power rendered them the most dangerous enemies, and the most serviceable allies. Hengist and Horsa, as they ranged along the eastern coast with three ships, were engaged, by the promise of an ample stipend, to embrace the defence of Britain; and their intrepid valour soon delivered the country from the Caledonian invaders. The isle of Thanet, a secure and fertile district, was allotted for the residence of these German auxiliaries, and they were supplied, according to the treaty, with a plentiful allowance of clothing and provisions. This favourable reception encouraged five thousand warriors to embark with their families in seventeen vessels, and the infant power of Hengist was fortified by this strong and seasonable reinforcement. The crafty barbarian suggested to Vortigern the obvious advantage of fixing, in the neighbourhood of the Picts, a colony of faithful allies: a third fleet of forty ships, under the command of his son and nephew, sailed from Germany, ravaged the Orkneys, and disembarked a new army on the coast of Northumberland, or Lothian, at the opposite extremity of the devoted land. It was easy to foresee, but it was impossible to prevent, the impending evils. The two nations were soon divided and exasperated by mutual jealousies. The Saxons magnified all that they had done and suffered in the cause of an ungrateful people; while the Britons regretted the liberal rewards which could not satisfy the avarice of those haughty mercenaries. The causes of fear and hatred were inflamed into an irreconcileable quarrel. The Saxons flew to arms; and if they perpetrated a

treacherous massacre during the security of a feast, they destroyed the reciprocal confidence which sustains the intercourse of peace and war.° CHAP. XXXVIII.

Hengist, who boldly aspired to the conquest of Britain, exhorted his countrymen to embrace the glorious opportunity: he painted in lively colours the fertility of the soil, the wealth of the cities, the pusillanimous temper of the natives, and the convenient situation of a spacious solitary island, accessible on all sides to the Saxon fleets. The successive colonies which issued, in the period of a century, from the mouths of the Elbe, the Weser, and the Rhine, were principally composed of three valiant tribes or nations of Germany; the *Jutes*, the *old Saxons*, and the *Angles*. The Jutes, who fought under the peculiar banner of Hengist, assumed the merit of leading their countrymen in the paths of glory, and of erecting, in Kent, the first independent kingdom. The fame of the enterprise was attributed to the primitive Saxons; and the common laws and language of the conquerors are described by the national appellation of a people, which, at the end of four hundred years, produced the first monarchs of South Britain. The Angles were distinguished by their numbers and their success; and they claimed the honour

Establishment of the Saxon heptarchy, A. D. 455-582.

° Nennius imputes to the Saxons the murder of three hundred British chiefs; a crime not unsuitable to their savage manners. But we are not obliged to believe (see Jeffrey of Monmouth, l. viii, c. 9-12), that Stonehenge is their monument, which the giants had formerly transported from Africa to Ireland, and which was removed to Britain by the order of Ambrosius, and the art of Merlin.

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of fixing a perpetual name on the country, of which they occupied the most ample portion. The barbarians, who followed the hopes of rapine either on the land or sea, were insensibly blended with this triple confederacy; the *Frisians*, who had been tempted by their vicinity to the British shores, might balance, during a short space, the strength and reputation of the native Saxons; the *Danes*, the *Prussians*, the *Rugians*, are faintly described; and some adventurous *Huns*, who had wandered as far as the Baltic, might embark on board the German vessels, for the conquest of a new world.[p] But this arduous achievement was not prepared or executed by the union of national powers. Each intrepid chieftain, according to the measure of his fame and fortunes, assembled his followers; equipped a fleet of three, or perhaps of sixty, vessels; chose the place of the attack; and conducted his subsequent operations according to the events of the war, and the dictates of his private interest. In the invasion of Britain many heroes vanquished and fell; but only seven victorious leaders assumed, or at least maintained, the title of kings. Seven independent thrones, the Saxon Heptarchy, were founded by the conquerors, and seven families, one of which has been continued, by female succession, to our present sovereign, derived their equal and sacred lineage from

[p] All these tribes are expressly enumerated by Bede (l. i, c. 15, p. 52; l. v, c. 9, p. 190); and though I have considered Mr Whitaker's remarks (Hist. of Manchester, vol. ii, p. 538-543), I do not perceive the absurdity of supposing that the Frisians, &c. were mingled with the Anglo-Saxons.

Woden, the god of war, it has been pretended, that this republic of kings was moderated by a general council and a supreme magistrate. But such an artificial scheme of policy is repugnant to the rude and turbulent spirit of the Saxons: their laws are silent; and their imperfect annals afford only a dark and bloody prospect of intestine discord.[q] CHAP. XXXVIII.

A monk, who, in the profound ignorance of human life, has presumed to exercise the office of historian, strangely disfigures the state of Britain at the time of its separation from the western empire. Gildas[r] describes in florid language the improvements of agriculture, the foreign trade which flowed with every tide into the Thames and the Severn, the solid and lofty construction of public and private edifices: he accuses the sinful luxury of the British people; of a people, according to the same writer, ignorant of the most simple arts, and incapable, without the aid of the Romans, of providing walls of stone, or weapons of iron, for the defence of their native land.[s] Under the long dominion of the em- State of the Britons.

[q] Bede has enumerated seven kings, two Saxons, a Jute, and four Angles, who successively acquired in the heptarchy an indefinite supremacy of power and renown. But their reign was the effect, not of law, but of conquest; and he observes, in similar terms, that one of them subdued the Isles of Man and Anglesey; and that another imposed a tribute on the Scots and Picts (Hist. Eccles. l, ii, c. 5, p. 83).

[r] See Gildas de Excidio Britanniæ, c. i, p. 1, edit. Gale.

[s] Mr Whitaker (History of Manchester, vol. ii, p. 503, 516) has smartly exposed this glaring absurdity, which had passed unnoticed by the general historians, as they were hastening to more interesting and important events.

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perors, Britain had been insensibly moulded into the elegant and servile form of a Roman province, whose safety was entrusted to a foreign power. The subjects of Honorius contemplated their new freedom with surprise and terror; they were left destitute of any civil or military constitution; and their uncertain rulers wanted either skill, or courage, or authority, to direct the public force against the common enemy. The introduction of the Saxons betrayed their internal weakness, and degraded the character both of the prince and people. Their consternation magnified the danger; the want of union diminished their resources; and the madness of civil factions was more solicitous to accuse, than to remedy, the evils, which they imputed to the misconduct of their adversaries. Yet the Britons were not ignorant, they could not be ignorant, of the manufacture or the use of arms: the successive and disorderly attacks of the Saxons, allowed them to recover from their amazement, and the prosperous or adverse events of the war added discipline and experience to their native valour.

Their resistance,

While the continent of Europe and Africa yielded, without resistance, to the barbarians, the British island, alone and unaided, maintained a long, a vigorous, though an unsuccessful struggle, against the formidable pirates, who, almost at the same instant, assaulted the northern, the eastern, and the southern coasts. The cities which had been fortified with skill, were defended with resolution; the advantages of ground,

hills, forests, and morasses, were diligently improved by the inhabitants; the conquest of each district was purchased with blood; and the defeats of the Saxons are strongly attested by the discreet silence of their annalist. Hengist might hope to achieve the conquest of Britain; but his ambition, in an active reign of thirty-five years, was confined to the possession of Kent; and the numerous colony which he had planted in the North, was extirpated by the sword of the Britons. The monarchy of the West-Saxons was laboriously founded by the persevering efforts of three martial generations. The life of Cerdic, one of the bravest of the children of Woden, was consumed in the conquest of Hampshire, and the isle of Wight; and the loss which he sustained in the battle of Mount Badon, reduced him to a state of inglorious repose. Kenric, his valiant son, advanced into Wiltshire; besieged Salisbury, at that time seated on a commanding eminence; and vanquished an army which advanced to the relief of the city. In the subsequent battle of Marlborough,[1] his British enemies displayed their military science. Their troops were formed in three lines; each line consisted of three distinct bodies, and the cavalry, the archers, and the pikemen, were distri- CHAP. XXXVIII.

[1] At Beran-birig, or Barbury castle, near Marlborough. The Saxon chronicle assigns the name and date. Cambden (Britannia, vol. i, p. 128) ascertains the place; and Henry of Huntingdon (Scriptores post Bedam, p. 314) relates the circumstances of this battle. They are probable and characteristic; and the historians of the twelfth century might consult some materials that no longer exist.

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buted according to the principles of Roman tactics. The Saxons charged in one weighty column, boldly encountered with their short swords the long lances of the Britons, and maintained an equal conflict till the approach of night. Two decisive victories, the death of three British kings, and the reduction of Cirencester, Bath, and Gloucester, established the fame and power of Ceaulin, the grandson of Cerdic, who carried his victorious arms to the banks of the Severn.

and flight.

After a war of an hundred years, the independent Britons still occupied the whole extent of the western coast, from the wall of Antoninus to the extreme promontory of Cornwall; and the principal cities of the inland country still opposed the arms of the barbarians. Resistance became more languid, as the number and boldness of the assailants continually increased. Winning their way by slow and painful efforts, the Saxons, the Angles, and their various confederates, advanced from the North, from the East, and from the South, till their victorious banners were united in the centre of the island. Beyond the Severn, the Britons still asserted their national freedom, which survived the heptarchy, and even the monarchy, of the Saxons. The bravest warriors, who preferred exile to slavery, found a secure refuge in the mountains of Wales: the reluctant submission of Cornwall was delayed for some ages;[u] and a band of fugitives ac-

[u] Cornwall was finally subdued by Athelstan (A. D. 927-941), who planted an English colony at Exeter, and confined the Britons be-

quired a settlement in Gaul, by their own valour, or the liberality of the Merovingian kings.[x] The western angle of Armorica acquired the new appellations of *Cornwall*, and the *Lesser Britain*; and the vacant lands of the Osismii were filled by a strange people, who, under the authority of their counts and bishops, preserved the laws and language of their ancestors. To the feeble descendants of Clovis and Charlemagne, the Britons of Armorica refused the customary tribute, subdued the neighbouring diocesses of Vannes, Rennes, and Nantes, and formed a powerful, though vassal, state, which has been united to the crown of France.[y] CHAP. XXXVIII.

yond the river Tamar. See William of Malmsbury, l. ii, in the Scriptores post Bedam, p. 50. The spirit of the Cornish knights was degraded by servitude; and it should seem, from the Romance of Sir Tristram, that their cowardice was almost proverbial.

[x] The establishment of the Britons in Gaul is proved in the sixth century, by Procopius, Gregory of Tours, the second council of Tours (A. D. 567), and the least suspicious of their chronicles and lives of saints. The subscription of a bishop of the Britons to the first council of Tours (A. D. 461, or rather 481), the army of Riothamus, and the loose declamation of Gildas (alii transmarinas petebant regiones, c. 25, p. 8), may countenance an emigration as early as the middle of the fifth century. Beyond that era, the Britons of Armorica can be found only in romance; and I am surprised that Mr Whitaker (Genuine History of the Britons, p. 214-221) should so faithfully transcribe the gross ignorance of Carte, whose venial errors he has so rigorously chastised.

[y] The antiquities of *Bretagne*, which have been the subject even of political controversy, are illustrated by Hadrian Valesius (Notitia Galliarum, sub voce *Britannia Cismarina*, p. 98-100); M. d'Anville (Notice de l'Ancienne Gaul, *Corisopiti*, *Curiosolites*, *Osismii*, *Vorganium*, p. 248, 258, 508, 720, and Etats de l'Europe, p. 76-80); Longuerue (Description de la France, tom. i, p. 84-94), and the Abbé de Vertot (Hist. Critique de l'Etablissement des Bretons dans les Gaules, 2 vol. in 12mo; Paris, 1720). I may assume the merit of examining the original evidence which they have produced.

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The fame of Arthur.

In a century of perpetual, or at least implacable war, much courage, and some skill, must have been exerted for the defence of Britain. Yet if the memory of its champions is almost buried in oblivion, we need not repine; since every age, however destitute of science or virtue, sufficiently abounds with acts of blood and military renown. The tomb of Vortimer, the son of Vortigern, was erected on the margin of the sea-shore, as a landmark formidable to the Saxons, whom he had thrice vanquished in the fields of Kent. Ambrosius Aurelian was descended from a noble family of Romans;[z] his modesty was equal to his valour, and his valour, till the last fatal action,[a] was crowned with splendid success. But every British name is effaced by the illustrious name of ARTHUR,[b] the hereditary prince of the Silures, in South Wales, and the elective king or general of the nation. According to the most rational account, he defeated,

[z] Bede, who, in his chronicle (p. 28), places Ambrosius under the reign of Zeno (A. D. 474-491), observes, that his parents had been "purpurâ induti;" which he explains in his ecclesiastical history, by "regium nomen et insigne ferentibus" (l. i, c. 16, p. 53). The expression of Nennius (c. 44, p. 110, edit. Gale) is still more singular, "Unus de *consulibus* gentis Romanicæ est pater meus."

[a] By the unanimous, though doubtful, conjecture of our antiquarians, Ambrosius is confounded with Natanleod, who (A. D. 508) lost his own life, and five thousand of his subjects, in a battle against Cerdic, the West Saxon (Chron. Saxon. p. 17, 18).

[b] As I am a stranger to the Welsh bards, Myrdhin, Llomarch, and Taliessin, my faith in the existence and exploits of Arthur principally rests on the simple and circumstantial testimony of Nennius (Hist. Brit. c. 62, 63, p. 114). Mr Whitaker (Hist. of Manchester, vol. ii, p. 31-71) has framed an interesting, and even probable, narrative of the wars of Arthur: though it is impossible to allow the reality of the Round Table.

in twelve successive battles, the Angles of the North, and the Saxons of the West; but the declining age of the hero was embittered by popular ingratitude, and domestic misfortunes. The events of his life are less interesting than the singular revolutions of his fame. During a period of five hundred years the tradition of his exploits was preserved, and rudely embellished, by the obscure bards of Wales and Armorica, who were odious to the Saxons, and unknown to the rest of mankind. The pride and curiosity of the Norman conquerors, prompted them to enquire into the ancient history of Britain: they listened with fond credulity to the tale of Arthur, and eagerly applauded the merit of a prince, who had triumphed over the Saxons, their common enemies. His romance, transcribed in the Latin of Jeffrey of Monmouth, and afterwards translated into the fashionable idiom of the times, was enriched with the various, though incoherent, ornaments, which were familiar to the experience, the learning, or the fancy, of the twelfth century. The progress of a Phrygian colony, from the Tiber to the Thames, was easily ingrafted on the fable of the Æneid; and the royal ancestors of Arthur derived their origin from Troy, and claimed their alliance with the Cæsars. His trophies were decorated with captive provinces, and imperial titles; and his Danish victories avenged the recent injuries of his country. The gallantry and superstition of the British hero, his feasts and tournaments, and the memorable institution of his Knights of the

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Round Table, were faithfully copied from the reigning manners of chivalry; and the fabulous exploits of Uther's son, appear less incredible, than the adventures which were achieved by the enterprising valour of the Normans. Pilgrimage, and the holy wars, introduced into Europe the specious miracles of Arabian magic. Fairies, and giants, flying dragons, and enchanted palaces, were blended with the more simple fictions o the West; and the fate of Britain depended on the art, or the predictions, of Merlin. Every nation embraced and adorned the popular romance of Arthur, and the Knights of the Round Table: their names were celebrated in Greece and Italy; and the voluminous tales of Sir Lancelot and Sir Tristram were devoutly studied by the princes and nobles, who disregarded the genuine heroes and historians of antiquity. At length the light of science and reason was rekindled; the talisman was broken; the visionary fabric melted into air; and by a natural, though unjust, reverse of the public opinion, the severity of the present age is inclined to question the *existence* of Arthur.[c]

Desolation of Britain.

Resistance, if it cannot avert, must increase the miseries of conquest; and conquest has never appeared more dreadful and destructive than in the hands of the Saxons; who hated the va-

[c] The progress of romance, and the state of learning, in the middle ages, are illustrated by Mr Thomas Wharton, with the taste of a poet, and the minute diligence of an antiquarian. I have derived much instruction from the two learned dissertations prefixed to the first volume of his History of English Poetry.

lour of their enemies, disdained the faith of treaties, and violated, without remorse, the most sacred objects of the Christian worship. The fields of battle might be traced, almost in every district, by monuments of bones; the fragments of falling towers were stained with blood; the last of the Britons, without distinction of age or sex, was massacred[d] in the ruins of Anderida;[e] and the repetition of such calamities was frequent and familiar under the Saxon heptarchy. The arts and religion, the laws and language, which the Romans had so carefully planted in Britain, were extirpated by their barbarous successors. After the destruction of the principal churches, the bishops, who had declined the crown of martyrdom, retired with the holy relics into Wales and Armorica; the remains of their flocks were left destitute of any spiritual food; the practice, and even the remembrance, of Christianity were abolished; and the British clergy might obtain some comfort from the damnation of the idolatrous strangers. The kings of France maintained the privileges of their Roman subjects; but the ferocious Saxons trampled on the laws of Rome, and of the emperors. The proceedings

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[d] Hoc anno (490) Ælla et Cissa obsederunt Andredes-Ceaster; et interfecerunt omnes qui id incoluerunt; adeo ut ne unus Brito ibi superstes fuerit (Chron. Saxon. p. 15); an expression more dreadful in its simplicity, than all the vague and tedious lamentations of the British Jeremiah.

[e] Andredes-Ceaster, or Anderida, is placed by Cambden (Britannia, vol. i, p. 258) at Newenden, in the marshy grounds of Kent, which might be formerly covered by the sea, and on the edge of the great forest (Anderida), which overspread so large a portion of Hampshire and Sussex.

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of civil and criminal jurisdiction, the titles of honour, the forms of office, the ranks of society, and even the domestic rights of marriage, testament, and inheritance, were finally suppressed; and the indiscriminate crowd of noble and plebeian slaves was governed by the traditionary customs, which had been coarsely framed for the shepherds and pirates of Germany. The language of science, of business, and of conversation, which had been introduced by the Romans, was lost in the general desolation. A sufficient number of Latin or Celtic words might be assumed by the Germans, to express their new wants and ideas;[f] but those *illiterate* pagans preserved and established the use of their national dialect.[g] Almost every name, conspicuous either in the church or state, reveals its Teutonic origin;[h] and the geography of *England* was universally inscribed with foreign characters and appellations. The example of a revolution, so rapid and so complete, may not easily be found; but it will excite a probable suspicion, that the arts of Rome were less deeply rooted in Britain than in Gaul or Spain; and that the native rude-

[f] Dr Johnson affirms that *few* English words are of British extraction. Mr Whitaker, who understands the British language, has discovered more than *three thousand*, and actually produces a long and various catalogue (vol. ii, p. 235-329). It is possible, indeed, that many of these words may have been imported from the Latin or Saxon into the native idiom of Britain.

[g] In the beginning of the seventh century, the Franks and the Anglo-Saxons mutually understood each other's language, which was derived from the same Teutonic root (Bede, l. i, c. 25, p. 60).

[h] After the first generation of Italian, or Scottish, missionaries, the dignities of the church were filled with Saxon proselytes.

ness of the country and its inhabitants, was covered by a thin varnish of Italian manners. CHAP. XXXVIII.

This strange alteration has persuaded historians, and even philosophers, that the provincials of Britain were totally exterminated; and that the vacant land was again peopled by the perpetual *influx*, and rapid increase, of the German colonies. Three hundred thousand Saxons are *said* to have obeyed the summons of Hengist;[i] the entire emigration of the Angles was attested, in the age of Bede, by the solitude of their native country;[k] and our experience has shown the free propagation of the human race, if they are cast on a fruitful wilderness, where their steps are unconfined, and their subsistence is plentiful. The Saxon kingdoms displayed the face of recent discovery and cultivation: the towns were small, the villages were distant; the husbandry was languid and unskilful; four sheep were equivalent to an acre of the best land;[l] an ample space of wood and morass was resigned to the vague dominion of nature; and the modern bishopric of Durham, the whole territory from the Tyne to the Tees, had returned to its primitive Servitude.

[i] Carte's History of England, vol. i, p. 195. He quotes the British historians; but I much fear that Jeffrey of Monmouth (l, vi, c. 15) is his only witness.

[k] Bede, Hist. Ecclesiast. l. i, c. 15, p. 52. The fact is probable, and well attested: yet such was the loose intermixture of the German tribes, that we find, in a subsequent period, the law of the Angli and Warini of Germany (Lindenbrog. Codex, p. 479-486).

[l] See Dr Henry's useful and laborious History of Great Britain, vol. ii, p. 388.

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state of a savage and solitary forest.[m] Such imperfect population might have been supplied, in some generations, by the English colonies; but neither reason nor facts can justify the unnatural supposition, that the Saxons of Britain remained alone in the desert which they had subdued. After the sanguinary barbarians had secured their dominion, and gratified their revenge, it was their interest to preserve the peasants, as well as the cattle, of the unresisting country. In each successive revolution, the patient herd becomes the property of its new masters; and the salutary compact of food and labour is silently ratified by their mutual necessities. Wilfrid, the apostle of Sussex,[n] accepted from his royal convert the gift of the peninsula of Selsey, near Chichester, with the persons and property of its inhabitants, who then amounted to eighty-seven families. He released them at once from spiritual and temporal bondage; and two hundred and fifty slaves of both sexes were baptized by their indulgent master. The kingdom of Sussex, which spread from the sea to the Thames, contained seven thousand families; twelve hundred were ascribed to the isle of Wight; and, if we multiply this vague computation, it

[m] Quicquid (says John of Tinemouth) inter Tynam et Tesam fluvios extitit sola eremi vastitudo tunc temporis fuit, et idcirco nullius ditioni servivit, eo quod sola indomitorum et sylvestrium animalium spelunca et habitatio fuit (apud Carte, vol. i, p. 195). From Bishop Nicholson (English Historical Library, p. 65, 98), I understand, that fair copies of John of Tinemouth's ample collections are preserved in the libraries of Oxford, Lambeth, &c.

[n] See the mission of Wilfrid, &c. in Bede, Hist. Eccles. l. iv, c. 13, 16, p. 155, 156, 159.

may seem probable, that England was cultivated by a million of servants, or *villains*, who were attached to the estates of their arbitrary landlords. The indigent barbarians were often tempted to sell their children or themselves into perpetual, and even foreign, bondage;[o] yet the special exemptions, which were granted to *national* slaves,[p] sufficiently declare, that they were much less numerous than the strangers and captives, who had lost their liberty or changed their masters, by the accidents of war. When time and religion had mitigated the fierce spirit of the Anglo-Saxons, the laws encouraged the frequent practice of manumission; and their subjects, of Welsh, or Cambrian, extraction, assume the respectable station of inferior freemen, possessed of lands, and entitled to the rights of civil society.[q] Such gentle treatment might secure the allegiance of a fierce people, who had been recently subdued on the confines of Wales and Cornwall. The sage Ina, the legislator of Wessex, united the two nations

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[o] From the concurrent testimony of Bede (l. ii, c. 1, p. 78), and William of Malmsbury (l. iii, p. 102), it appears that the Anglo-Saxons, from the first, to the last, age, persisted in this unnatural practice. Their youths were publicly sold in the market of Rome.

[p] According to the laws of Ina, they could not be lawfully sold beyond the seas.

[q] The life of a *Wallus*, or *Cambricus*, *homo*, who possessed a hyde of land, is fixed at 120 shillings, by the same laws (of Ina, tit. xxxii, in Leg. Anglo-Saxon. p. 20), which allowed 200 shillings for a free Saxon, and 1200 for a Thane (see likewise Leg. Anglo-Saxon. p. 71). We may observe, that these legislators, the West Saxons and Mercians, continued their British conquests after they became Christians. The laws of the four kings of Kent do not condescend to notice the existence of any subject Britons.

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in the bands of domestic alliance; and four British lords of Somersetshire may be honourably distinguished in the court of a Saxon monarch.[r]

Manners of the Britons.

The independent Britons appear to have relapsed into the state of original barbarism, from whence they had been imperfectly reclaimed. Separated by their enemies from the rest of mankind, they soon became an object of scandal and abhorrence to the catholic world.[s] Christianity was still professed in the mountains of Wales; but the rude schismatics in the *form* of the clerical tonsure, and in the *day* of the celebration of Easter, obstinately resisted the imperious mandates of the Roman pontiffs. The use of the Latin language was insensibly abolished, and the Britons were deprived of the arts and learning which Italy communicated to her Saxon proselytes. In Wales and Armorica, the Celtic tongue, the native idiom of the West, was preserved and propagated; and the *Bards*, who had been the companions of the Druids, were still protected, in the sixteenth century, by the laws of Elizabeth. Their chief, a respectable officer of the courts of Pengwern, or Aberfraw, or Caermarthaen, accompanied the king's servants to war: the monarchy of the Britons, which he sung in the front of battle, excited their courage, and justified their depredations; and the song-

[r] See Carte's Hist. of England, vol. i, p. 278.

[s] At the conclusion of his history (A. D. 731), Bede describes the ecclesiastical state of the island, and censures the implacable, though impotent, hatred of the Britons, against the English nation, and the catholic church (l. v. c. 23, p. 219).

ster claimed for his legitimate prize the fairest heifer of the spoil. His subordinate ministers, the masters and disciples of vocal and instrumental music, visited, in their respective circuits, the royal, the noble, and the plebeian houses; and the public poverty, almost exhausted by the clergy, was oppressed by the importunate demands of the bards. Their rank and merit were ascertained by solemn trials, and the strong belief of supernatural inspiration exalted the fancy of the poet, and of his audience.[t] The last retreats of Celtic freedom, the extreme territories of Gaul and Britain, were less adapted to agriculture than to pasturage: the wealth of the Britons consisted in their flocks and herds; milk and flesh were their ordinary food; and bread was sometimes esteemed, or rejected, as a foreign luxury. Liberty had peopled the mountains of Wales and the morasses of Armorica: but their populousness has been maliciously ascribed to the loose practice of polygamy; and the houses of these licentious barbarians have been supposed to contain ten wives and perhaps fifty children.[u] Their disposition was rash

[t] Mr Pennant's Tour in Wales (p 426-449) has furnished me with a curious and interesting account of the Welsh bards. In the year 1568, a session was held at Caerwys by the special command of Queen Elizabeth, and regular degrees in vocal and instrumental music were conferred on fifty-five minstrels. The prize (a silver harp) was adjudged by the Mostyn family.

[u] Regio longe lateque diffusa, milite, magis quam credibile sit, referta. Partibus equidem in illis miles unus quinquaginta generat fortitus more barbaro denas aut amplius uxores. This reproach of William of Poitiers (in the Historians of France, tom. xi, p. 88) is disclaimed by the Benedictine editors.

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and choleric: they were bold in action and in speech;[x] and as they were ignorant of the arts of peace, they alternately indulged their passions in foreign and domestic war. The cavalry of Armorica, the spearmen of Gwent, and the archers of Merioneth, were equally formidable; but their poverty could seldom procure either shields or helmets; and the inconvenient weight would have retarded the speed and agility of their desultory operations. One of the greatest of the English monarchs was requested to satisfy the curiosity of a Greek emperor concerning the state of Britain; and Henry II. could assert, from his personal experience, that Wales was inhabited by a race of naked warriors, who encountered, without fear, the defensive armour of their enemies.[y]

Obscure or fabulous state of Britain.

By the revolution of Britain, the limits of science, as well as of empire, were contracted. The dark cloud, which had been cleared by the Phœnician discoveries, and finally dispelled by the arms of Cæsar, again settled on the shores of the Atlantic, and a Roman province was again lost among the fabulous islands of the Ocean. One hundred and fifty years after the reign of Hono-

[x] Giraldus Cambrensis confines this gift of bold and ready eloquence to the Romans, the French, and the Britons. The malicious Welshman insinuates, that the English taciturnity might possibly be the effect of their servitude under the Normans.

[y] The picture of Welsh and Armorican manners is drawn from Giraldus (Descript. Cambriæ, c. 6-15, inter Script. Cambden. p. 886-891), and the authors quoted by the Abbé de Vertot (Hist. Critique, tom. ii, p. 259-266).

rius, the gravest historian of the times[z] describes the wonders of a remote isle, whose eastern and western parts are divided by an antique wall, the boundary of life and death, or, more properly, of truth and fiction. The east is a fair country, inhabited by a civilized people: the air is healthy, the waters are pure and plentiful, and the earth yields her regular and fruitful increase. In the west, beyond the wall, the air is infectious and mortal; the ground is covered with serpents; and this dreary solitude is the region of departed spirits, who are transported from the opposite shores in substantial boats, and by living rowers. Some families of fishermen, the subjects of the Franks, are excused from tribute, in consideration of the mysterious office which is performed by these Charons of the ocean. Each in his turn is summoned, at the hour of midnight, to hear the voices, and even the names, of the ghosts; he is sensible of their weight, and he feels himself impelled by an unknown, but irresistible, power. After this dream of fancy, we read with astonishment that the name of this island is *Brittia;* that it lies in the ocean, against the mouth of the Rhine, and less than thirty miles from the continent; that it is possessed by three nations, the Frisians, the Angles, and the Britons; and that some Angles had appeared at Constantinople, in the train of the

[z] See Procopius de Bell. Gothic. l. iv, c. 20, p. 620-625. The Greek historian is himself so confounded by the wonders which he relates, that he weakly attempts to distinguish the islands of *Brittia* and *Britain*, which he has identified by so many inseparable circumstances.

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French ambassadors. From these ambassadors Procopius might be informed of a singular, though not improbable, adventure, which announces the spirit, rather than the delicacy, of an English heroine. She had been betrothed to Radiger, king of the Varni, a tribe of Germans who touched the ocean and the Rhine; but the perfidious lover was tempted, by motives of policy, to prefer his father's widow, the sister of Theodebert, king of the Franks.[a] The forsaken princess of the Angles, instead of bewailing, revenged her disgrace. Her warlike subjects are *said* to have been ignorant of the use, and even of the form, of an horse; but she boldly sailed from Britain to the mouth of the Rhine, with a fleet of four hundred ships, and an army of one hundred thousand men. After the loss of a battle, the captive Radiger implored the mercy of his victorious bride, who generously pardoned his offence, dismissed her rival, and compelled the king of the Varni to discharge with honour and fidelity the duties of an husband.[b] This gal-

[a] Theodebert, grandson of Clovis, and king of Austrasia, was the most powerful and warlike prince of the age; and this remarkable adventure may be placed between the years 534 and 547, the extreme terms of his reign. His sister Theudechildis retired to Sens, where she founded monasteries, and distributed alms (see the notes of the Benedictine editors, in tom. ii, p. 216). If we may credit the praises of Fortunatus (l. vi, carm. 5, in tom. ii, p. 507), Radiger was deprived of a most valuable wife.

[b] Perhaps she was the sister of one of the princes or chiefs of the Angles, who landed in 527, and the following years, between the Humber and the Thames, and gradually founded the kingdoms of East Anglia and Mercia. The English writers are ignorant of her name and existence: but Procopius may have suggested to Mr Rowe the character and situation of Rodugune in the tragedy of the Royal Convert.

lant exploit appears to be the last naval enterprise of the Anglo-Saxons.[c] The arts of navigation, by which they had acquired the empire of Britain and of the sea, were soon neglected by the indolent barbarians, who supinely renounced all the commercial advantages of their insular situation. Seven independent kingdoms were agitated by perpetual discord; and the *British world* was seldom connected, either in peace or war, with the nations of the continent. CHAP. XXXVIII.

Fall of the Roman empire in the West.

I have now accomplished the laborious narrative of the decline and fall of the Roman empire, from the fortunate age of Trajan and the Antonines, to its total extinction in the West, about five centuries after the Christian era. At that unhappy period, the Saxons fiercely struggled with the natives for the possession of Britain; Gaul and Spain were divided between the powerful monarchies of the Franks and Visigoths, and the dependent kingdoms of the Suevi and Burgundians: Africa was exposed to the cruel persecution of the Vandals, and the savage insults of the Moors: Rome and Italy, as far as the banks of the Danube, were afflicted by an army of barbarian mercenaries, whose lawless tyranny was succeeded by the reign of Theodoric the Ostrogoth. All the subjects of the empire, who,

[c] In the copious history of Gregory of Tours, we cannot find any traces of hostile or friendly intercourse between France and England, except in the marriage of the daughter of Caribert, king of Paris, quam regis *cujusdam* in Cantia filius matrimonio copulavit (l. ix, c. 26, in tom. ii, p. 348). The bishop of Tours ended his history and his life almost immediately before the conversion of Kent.

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by the use of the Latin language, more particularly deserved the name and privileges of Romans, were oppressed by the disgrace and calamities of foreign conquest; and the victorious nations of Germany established a new system of manners and government in the western countries of Europe. The majesty of Rome was faintly represented by the princes of Constantinople, the feeble and imaginary successors of Augustus. Yet they continued to reign over the East, from the Danube to the Nile and Tigris; the Gothic and Vandal kingdoms of Italy and Africa were subverted by the arms of Justinian; and the history of the *Greek* emperors may still afford a long series of instructive lessons, and interesting revolutions.

General Observations on the Fall of the Roman Empire in the West.

THE Greeks, after their country had been reduced into a province, imputed the triumphs of Rome, not to the merit, but to the FORTUNE, of the republic. The inconstant goddess, who so blindly distributes and resumes her favours, had *now* consented (such was the language of envious flattery) to resign her wings, to descend from her globe, and to fix her firm and immutable throne on the banks of the Tiber.[a] A wiser Greek, who has composed, with a philosophic spirit, the memorable history of his own times, deprived his countrymen of this vain and delusive comfort, by opening to their view the deep foundations of the greatness of Rome.[b] The fidelity of the citizens to each other, and to the state, was confirmed by the habits of education, and the prejudices of religion. Honour, as well as virtue, was the principle of the republic; the ambitious citizens laboured to deserve the solemn

[a] Such are the figurative expressions of Plutarch (Opera, tom. ii. p. 318, edit. Wechel), to whom, on the faith of his son Lamprias (Fabricius, Bibliot. Græc. tom. iii, p. 341), I shall boldly impute the malicious declamation, περὶ τῆς Ῥωμαίων τύχης. The same opinions had prevailed among the Greeks two hundred and fifty years before Plutarch: and to confute them, is the professed intention of Polybius (Hist. l. i, p. 90, edit. Gronov. Amstel. 1670).

[b] See the inestimable remains of the sixth book of Polybius, and many other parts of his general history, particularly a digression in the seventeenth book, in which he compares the phalanx and the legion.

glories of a triumph; and the ardour of the Roman youth was kindled into active emulation, as often as they beheld the domestic images of their ancestors.[c] The temperate struggles of the patricians and plebeians had finally established the firm and equal balance of the constitution; which united the freedom of popular assemblies, with the authority and wisdom of a senate, and the executive powers of a regal magistrate. When the consul displayed the standard of the republic, each citizen bound himself, by the obligation of an oath, to draw his sword in the cause of his country, till he had discharged the sacred duty by a military service of ten years. This wise institution continually poured into the field the rising generations of freemen and soldiers; and their numbers were reinforced by the warlike and populous states of Italy, who, after a brave resistance, had yielded to the valour, and embraced the alliance, of the Romans. The sage historian, who excited the virtue of the younger Scipio, and beheld the ruin of Carthage,[d] has accurately described their military system; their levies, arms, exercises, subordination, marches, encamp-

[c] Sallust. de Bell. Jugurthin. c. 4. Such were the generous professions of P. Scipio and Q. Maximus. The Latin Historian had read, and most probably transcribes, Polybius, their contemporary and friend.

[d] While Carthage was in flames, Scipio repeated two lines of the Iliad, which express the destruction of Troy, and acknowledged to Polybius, his friend and preceptor (Polyb. in Excerpt. de Virtut. et Vit. tom. ii. p. 1455–1465), that while he recollected the vicissitudes of human affairs, he inwardly applied them to the future calamities of Rome (Appian, in Libycis, p. 136, edit. Toll.).

ments; and the invincible legion, superior in active strength to the Macedonian phalanx of Philip and Alexander. From these institutions of peace and war, Polybius has deduced the spirit and success of a people, incapable of fear, and impatient of repose. The ambitious design of conquest, which might have been defeated by the seasonable conspiracy of mankind, was attempted and achieved; and the perpetual violation of justice was maintained by the political virtues of prudence and courage. The arms of the republic, sometimes vanquished in battle, always victorious in war, advanced with rapid steps to the Euphrates, the Danube, the Rhine, and the Ocean; and the images of gold, or silver, or brass, that might serve to represent the nations and their kings, were successively broken by the *iron* monarchy of Rome.*

The rise of a city, which swelled into an empire, may deserve, as a singular prodigy, the reflection of a philosophic mind. But the decline of Rome was the natural and inevitable effect of immoderate greatness. Prosperity ripened the principle of decay; the causes of destruction multiplied with the extent of conquest; and as soon as time or accident had removed the artificial

* See Daniel, ii, 31-40. "And the fourth kingdom shall be strong "as *iron*; forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces, and subdueth all "things." The remainder of the prophecy (the mixture of iron and *clay*) was accomplished, according to St Jerom, in his own time. Sicut enim in principio nihil Romano Imperio fortius et durius, ita in fine rerum nihil imbecillius; quam et in bellis civilibus et adversus diversas nationes, aliarum gentium barbararum auxilio indigemus. (Opera, tom. v, p. 572).

supports, the stupendous fabric yielded to the pressure of its own weight. The story of its ruin is simple and obvious; and instead of enquiring *why* the Roman empire was destroyed, we should rather be surprised that it had subsisted so long. The victorious legions, who, in distant wars, acquired the vices of strangers and mercenaries, first oppressed the freedom of the republic, and afterwards violated the majesty of the purple. The emperors, anxious for their personal safety and the public peace, were reduced to the base expedient of corrupting the discipline which rendered them alike formidable to their sovereign and to the enemy; the vigour of the military government was relaxed, and finally dissolved, by the partial institutions of Constantine; and the Roman world was overwhelmed by a deluge of barbarians.

The decay of Rome has been frequently ascribed to the translation of the seat of empire; but this history has already shown, that the powers of government were *divided*, rather than *removed*. The throne of Constantinople was erected in the East; while the West was still possessed by a series of emperors who held their residence in Italy, and claimed their equal inheritance of the legions and provinces. This dangerous novelty impaired the strength, and fomented the vices, of a double reign: the instruments of an oppressive and arbitrary system were multiplied; and a vain emulation of luxury, not of merit, was introduced and supported between the degenerate

successors of Theodosius. Extreme distress, which unites the virtue of a free people, embitters the factions of a declining monarchy. The hostile favourites of Arcadius and Honorius betrayed the republic to its common enemies; and the Byzantine court beheld with indifference, perhaps with pleasure, the disgrace of Rome, the misfortunes of Italy, and the loss of the West. Under the succeeding reigns, the alliance of the two empires was restored; but the aid of the oriental Romans was tardy, doubtful, and ineffectual; and the national schism of the Greeks and Latins was enlarged by the perpetual difference of language and manners, of interest, and even of religion. Yet the salutary event approved in some measure the judgment of Constantine. During a long period of decay, his impregnable city repelled the victorious armies of barbarians, protected the wealth of Asia, and commanded, both in peace and war, the important straits which connect the Euxine and Mediterranean seas. The foundation of Constantinople more essentially contributed to the preservation of the East, than to the ruin of the West.

As the happiness of a *future* life is the great object of religion, we may hear without surprise or scandal, that the introduction, or at least the abuse, of Christianity, had some influence on the decline and fall of the Roman empire. The clergy successfully preached the doctrines of patience and pusillanimity; the active virtues of society were discouraged; and the last remains

of military spirit were buried in the cloister; a large portion of public and private wealth was consecrated to the specious demands of charity and devotion; and the soldiers pay was lavished on the useless multitudes of both sexes, who could only plead the merits of abstinence and chastity. Faith, zeal, curiosity, and the more earthly passions of malice and ambition, kindled the flame of theological discord; the church, and even the state, were distracted by religious factions, whose conflicts were sometimes bloody, and always implacable; the attention of the emperors was diverted from camps to synods: the Roman world was oppressed by a new species of tyranny; and the persecuted sects became the secret enemies of their country. Yet party-spirit, however pernicious or absurd, is a principle of union as well as of dissension. The bishops, from eighteen hundred pulpits, inculcated the duty of passive obedience to a lawful and orthodox soverign; their frequent assemblies, and perpetual correspondence, maintained the communion of distant churches; and the benevolent temper of the gospel was strengthened, though confined, by the spiritual alliance of the catholics. The sacred indolence of the monks was devoutly embraced by a servile and effeminate age; but if superstition had not afforded a decent retreat, the same vices would have tempted the unworthy Romans to desert, from baser motives, the standard of the republic. Religious precepts are easily obeyed, which indulge and

sanctify the natural inclinations of their votaries; but the pure and genuine influence of Christianity may be traced in its beneficial, though imperfect, effects on the barbarian proselytes of the North. If the decline of the Roman empire was hastened by the conversion of Constantine, his victorious religion broke the violence of the fall, and mollified the ferocious temper of the conquerors.

This awful revolution may be usefully applied to the instruction of the present age. It is the duty of a patriot to prefer and promote the exclusive interest and glory of his native country; but a philosopher may be permitted to enlarge his views, and to consider Europe as one great republic, whose various inhabitants have attained almost the same level of politeness and cultivation. The balance of power will continue to fluctuate, and the prosperity of our own, or the neighbouring kingdoms, may be alternately exalted or depressed; but these partial events cannot essentially injure our general state of happiness, the system of arts, and laws, and manners, which so advantageously distinguish, above the rest of mankind, the Europeans and their colonies. The savage nations of the globe are the common enemies of civilized society; and we may enquire with anxious curiosity, whether Europe is still threatened with a repetition of those calamities, which formerly oppressed the arms and institutions of Rome. Perhaps the same reflections will illustrate the fall of that mighty empire, and explain the probable causes of our actual security.

I. The Romans were ignorant of the extent of their danger, and the number of their enemies. Beyond the Rhine and Danube, the northern countries of Europe and Asia were filled with innumerable tribes of hunters and shepherds, poor, voracious, and turbulent; bold in arms, and impatient to ravish the fruits of industry. The barbarian world was agitated by the rapid impulse of war; and the peace of Gaul or Italy was shaken by the distant revolutions of China. The Huns, who fled before a victorious enemy, directed their march towards the West; and the torrent was swelled by the gradual accession of captives and allies. The flying tribes who yielded to the Huns, assumed in *their* turn the spirit of conquest; the endless column of barbarians pressed on the Roman empire with accumulated weight; and, if the foremost were destroyed, the vacant space was instantly replenished by new assailants. Such formidable emigrations can no longer issue from the North; and the long repose, which has been imputed to the decrease of population, is the happy consequence of the progress of arts and agriculture. Instead of some rude villages, thinly scattered among its woods and morasses, Germany now produces a list of two thousand three hundred walled towns; the Christian kingdoms of Denmark, Sweden, and Poland, have been successively established; and the Hanse merchants, with the Teutonic knights, have extended their colonies along the coast of the Baltic, as far as the gulf of Finland. From the gulf of Finland to the

eastern ocean, Russia now assumes the form of a powerful and civilized empire. The plough, the loom, and the forge, are introduced on the banks of the Volga, the Oby, and the Lena; and the fiercest of the Tartar hordes have been taught to tremble and obey. The reign of independent barbarism is now contracted to a narrow span; and the remnant of Calmucks or Uzbecks, whose forces may be almost numbered, cannot seriously excite the apprehensions of the great republic of Europe. Yet this apparent security should not tempt us to forget that new enemies, and unknown dangers, may *possibly* arise from some obscure people, scarcely visible in the map of the world. The Arabs, or Saracens, who spread their conquests from India to Spain, had languished in poverty and contempt, till Mahomet breathed into those savage bodies the soul of enthusiasm.[b]

II. The empire of Rome was firmly established by the singular and perfect coalition of its members. The subject nations, resigning the hope, and even the wish, of independence, embraced the character of Roman citizens; and the provinces of the West were reluctantly torn

[b] The French and English editors of the Genealogical History of the Tartars have subjoined a curious, though imperfect, description of their present state. We might question the independence of the Calmucks, or Eluths, since they have been recently vanquished by the Chinese, who, in the year, 1759, subdued the lesser Bucharia, and advanced into the country of Badakshan, near the sources of the Oxus (Memoires sur les Chinois, tom. i, p. 325-400). But these conquests are precarious, nor will I venture to insure the safety of the Chinese empire.

by the barbarians from the bosom of their mother country.[s] But this union was purchased by the loss of national freedom and military spirit; and the servile provinces, destitute of life and motion, expected their safety from the mercenary troops and governors, who were directed by the orders of a distant court. The happiness of an hundred millions depended on the personal merit of one or two men, perhaps children, whose minds were corrupted by education, luxury, and despotic power. The deepest wounds were inflicted on the empire during the minorities of the sons and grandsons of Theodosius; and after those incapable princes seemed to attain the age of manhood, they abandoned the church to the bishops, the state to the eunuchs, and the provinces to the barbarians. Europe is now divided into twelve powerful, though unequal, kingdoms, three respectable commonwealths, and a variety of smaller, though independent, states: the chances of royal and ministerial talents are multiplied at least with the number of its rulers; and a Julian, or Semiramis, may reign in the North, while Arcadius and Honorius again slumber on the thrones of the South. The abuses of tyranny are restrained by the mutual influence of fear and shame; republics have acquired order and stability; monarchies have imbibed the principles of freedom,

[s] The prudent reader will determine how far this general proposition is weakened by the revolt of the Isaurians, the independence of Britain and Armorica, the Moorish tribes, or the Bagaudæ of Gaul and Spain (vol. i, p. 340; vol. iii, p. 273, 337, 434).

or, at least, of moderation; and some sense of honour and justice is introduced into the most defective constitutions, by the general manners of the times. In peace, the progress of knowledge and industry is accelerated by the emulation of so many active rivals: in war, the European forces are exercised by temperate and indecisive contests. If a savage conqueror should issue from the deserts of Tartary, he must repeatedly vanquish the robust peasants of Russia, the numerous armies of Germany, the gallant nobles of France, and the intrepid freemen of Britain; who, perhaps, might confederate for their common defence. Should the victorious barbarians carry slavery and desolation as far as the Atlantic ocean, ten thousand vessels would transport beyond their pursuit the remains of civilized society; and Europe would revive and flourish in the American world, which is already filled with her colonies and institutions.[h]

III. Cold, poverty, and a life of danger and fatigue, fortify the strength and courage of barbarians. In every age they have oppressed the polite and peaceful nations of China, India, and Persia, who neglected, and still neglect, to counterbalance these natural powers by the resources of military art. The warlike states of antiquity,

[h] America now contains about six millions of European blood and descent; and their numbers, at least in the North, are continually increasing. Whatever may be the changes of their political situation, they must preserve the manners of Europe; and we may reflect with some pleasure, that the English language will probably be diffused over an immense and populous continent.

Greece, Macedonia, and Rome, educated a race of soldiers; exercised their bodies, disciplined their courage, multiplied their forces by regular evolutions, and converted the iron which they possessed into strong and serviceable weapons. But this superiority insensibly declined with their laws and manners; and the feeble policy of Constantine and his successors armed and instructed, for the ruin of the empire, the rude valour of the barbarian mercenaries. The military art has been changed by the invention of gunpowder, which enables men to command the two most powerful agents of nature, air and fire. Mathematics, chemistry, mechanics, architecture, have been applied to the service of war; and the adverse parties oppose to each other the most elaborate modes of attack and of defence. Historians may indignantly observe, that the preparations of a siege would found and maintain a flourishing colony;[1] yet we cannot be displeased, that the subversion of a city should be a work of cost and difficulty; or that an industrious people should be protected by those arts, which survive

[1] On avoit fait venir (for the siege of Turin) 140 pieces de canon; et il est à remarquer que chaque gros canon monté revient à environ 2000 ecus: il y avoit 110,000 boulets; 106,000 cartouches d'un façon, et 300,000 d'une autre; 21,000 bombes; 27,700 grenades, 15,000 sacs à terre, 30,000 instrumens pour le pionnage; 1,200,000 livres de poudre. Ajoutez à ces munitions, le plomb, le fer, et le fer-blanc, les cordages, tout ce qui fert aux mineurs, le souphre, le salpétre, les outils de toute espece. Il est certain que les frais de tous ces préparatifs de destruction suffiroient pour fonder et pour faire fleurir la plus nombreuse colonie. Voltaire, Siécle de Louis XIV, c. xx, in his Works, tom. xi, p. 391.

and supply the decay of military virtue. Cannon and fortifications now form an impregnable barrier against the Tartar horse; and Europe is secure from any future irruption of barbarians; since, before they can conquer, they must cease to be barbarous. Their gradual advances in the science of war would always be accompanied, as we may learn from the example of Russia, with a proportionable improvement in the arts of peace and civil policy; and they themselves must deserve a place among the polished nations whom they subdue.

Should these speculations be found doubtful or fallacious, there still remains a more humble source of comfort and hope. The discoveries of ancient and modern navigators, and the domestic history, or tradition, of the most enlightened nations, represent the *human savage*, naked both in mind and body, and destitute of laws, of arts, of ideas, and almost of language.[k] From this abject condition, perhaps the primitive and universal state of man, he has gradually arisen to command the animals, to fertilize the earth, to traverse the ocean, and to measure the

[k] It would be an easy, though tedious, task to produce the authorities of poets, philosophers, and historians. I shall therefore content myself with appealing to the decisive and authentic testimony of Diodorus Siculus (tom. i, l. i, p. 11, 12; l. iii, p. 184, &c. edit. Wesseling). The Icthyophagi, who in his time wandered along the shores of the Red sea, can only be compared to the natives of New Holland (Dampier's Voyages, vol. i, p. 464-469). Fancy, or perhaps reason, may still suppose an extreme and absolute state of nature far below the level of these savages, who had acquired some arts and instruments.

heavens. His progress in the improvement and exercise of his mental and corporeal faculties[1] has been irregular and various; infinitely slow in the beginning, and increasing by degrees with redoubled velocity: ages of laborious ascent have been followed by a moment of rapid downfal; and the several climates of the globe have felt the vicissitudes of light and darkness. Yet the experience of four thousand years should enlarge our hopes, and diminish our apprehensions; we cannot determine to what height the human species may aspire in their advances towards perfection; but it may safely be presumed that no people, unless the face of nature is changed, will relapse into their original barbarism. The improvements of society may be viewed under a threefold aspect. 1. The poet or philosopher illustrates his age and country by the efforts of a *single* mind; but these superior powers of reason or fancy are rare and spontaneous productions, and the genius of Homer, or Cicero, or Newton, would excite less admiration, if they could be created by the will of a prince, or the lessons of a preceptor. 2. The benefits of law and policy, of trade and manufactures, of arts and sciences, are more solid and permanent; and *many* individuals may be qualified, by education and discipline, to promote, in their

[1] See the learned and rational work of the President Goguet, de l'Origine des Loix des Arts et des Sciences. He traces from facts, or conjectures (tom. i, p. 147-337, edit. 12mo), the first and most difficult steps of human invention.

respective stations, the interest of the community. But this general order is the effect of skill and labour; and the complex machinery may be decayed by time, or injured by violence. 3. Fortunately for mankind, the more useful, or, at least, more necessary arts, can be performed without superior talents, or national subordination; without the powers of *one*, or the union *of many*. Each village, each family, each individual, must always possess both ability and inclination, to perpetuate the use of fire[m] and of metals; the propagation and service of domestic animals; the methods of hunting and fishing; the rudiments of navigation; the imperfect cultivation of corn, or other nutritive grain; and the simple practice of the mechanic trades. Private genius and public industry may be extirpated; but these hardy plants survive the tempest, and strike an everlasting root into the most unfavourable soil. The splendid days of Augustus and Trajan were eclipsed by a cloud of ignorance; and the barbarians subverted the laws and palaces of Rome. But the scythe, the invention or emblem of Saturn,[n] still continued annually to mow the harvests of Italy; and the

[m] It is certain, however strange, that many nations have been ignorant of the use of fire. Even the ingenious natives of Otaheite, who are destitute of metals, have not invented any earthen vessels capable of sustaining the action of fire, and of communicating the heat to the liquids which they contain.

[n] Plutarch. Quæst. Rom. in tom. ii, p. 275. Macrob. Saturnal. l. i, c. 8, p. 152, edit. London. The arrival of Saturn (of his religious worship) in a ship, may indicate, that the savage coast of Latium was first discovered and civilized by the Phœnicians.

human feasts of the Læstrigons[o] have never been renewed on the coast of Campania.

Since the first discovery of the arts, war, commerce, and religious zeal have diffused, among the savages of the Old and New World, these inestimable gifts: they have been successively propagated; they can never be lost. We may therefore acquiesce in the pleasing conclusion, that every age of the world has increased, and still increases, the real wealth, the happiness, the knowledge, and perhaps the virtue, of the human race.[p]

[o] In the ninth and tenth books of the Odyssey, Homer has embellished the tales of fearful and credulous sailors, who transformed the cannibals of Italy and Sicily into monstrous giants.

[p] The merit of discovery has too often been stained with avarice, cruelty, and fanaticism; and the intercourse of nations has produced the communication of disease and prejudice. A singular exception is due to the virtue of our own times and country. The five great voyages, successively undertaken by the command of his present majesty, were inspired by the pure and generous love of science and of mankind. The same prince, adapting his benefactions to the different stages of society, has founded a school of painting in his capital; and has introduced into the islands of the South Sea, the vegetables and animals most useful to human life.

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